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And that which is not good, is not delicious
To a well-governed and wise appetite."—COMUS.

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CHARMS AND COUNTER-CHARMS.

CHAPTER I.

Quin. Is all our company here?

Bottom. You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip.

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

THE foliage around Mr. Beresford's country mansion had assumed the gorgeous coloring of autumn, and glowing beneath the bright sun of a clear, still, October morning, lent somewhat of its own brilliant tint to the delicate cheek of a young girl who, standing in the piazza, overshadowed by drooping elms and clustering vines, was bending an eager gaze forward upon the road, of which she could only catch glimpses as the breeze waved aside the leafy screen before her. Near her, leaning against one of the carved wooden pillars which stood at each side of the wide hall door, was a young man whose countenance was singularly prepossessing, from its blending of almost childlike openness with manly spirit and decision. There was a slight tinge of red in the wavy brown hair which was brushed carelessly back from his forehead, his features were regular and harmonious, and the mouth, with its short, curved upper lip, seemed formed for laughter. There was a smile upon it even now, though a touch of sadness might be discerned in the eyes, which were fixed as intently upon his companion as hers were upon the road. Tender admiration

was visible through that sadness,—an admiration at which none could wonder who looked upon its lovely object.

Just of that height which the sculptor has chosen for the statue of Beauty's Queen, Evelyn Beresford's slender form would have excited a painful apprehension of delicate health, had not the apprehension been relieved by its rounded symmetry, the buoyant life visible in every elastic movement, and the extreme youthfulness of her face, which indicated that she was still in the first dawn of womanhood. That face was delicately fair; yet the ruby lips and the peach-like bloom of the cheeks relieved it from the charge of paleness. Her features were small, but of chiselled beauty and regularity. Her hair, which fell in luxuriant curls over her neck and shoulders, glittered in the sunshine like golden threads. Her eyes, of the darkest hazel, were full of the soul's light, and gave to her countenance a depth of expression, which it might else have been supposed to want. Nothing could be more unstudied, yet nothing more graceful than the attitude in which she now appeared, with one beautifully-moulded hand shading her eyes from the glare of light. She had stood thus for more than a minute, when suddenly turning to her companion, she exclaimed joyously, "They are coming!—I see them!"

He smiled; but the smile was as grave as the tone in which he said, "You seem strangely rejoiced, Evelyn, to leave your home and your friends."

Those tender eyes were raised for a moment inquiringly to his face; then extending her hand to him with the frankness of childhood, she said, as he clasped it, "You are an ungrateful man, Mr. Everard Irving, and do not deserve to be reminded that I am going to the place in which you live."

His face, for a moment, was as joyous as her own, but it clouded over as he replied, "Ah, Evelyn, but you are going

to a stranger's house, where I must visit you with ceremony. Here, I may at least enjoy the intimacy of a friend; at Mrs. Mabury's I must be content with the courtesy of an acquaintance, unless your father would withdraw his interdict to our engagement, and allow me to appear in my true character, as your lover—your affianced lover."

Evelyn's eyes sank beneath his, and she turned away her blushing face as she replied, in a low and somewhat embarrassed tone, "If I had known that my going would give you pain, I would have declined Mrs. Mabury's invitation; but I thought you would like that I should be in the city, where we could meet every day."

"Was that your only reason for desiring to go, Evelyn?"

The eyes which had just been withdrawn were again turned upon him, and though the color deepened on Evelyn's cheek, she replied frankly, "No, that was not all. I do admire Mrs. Mabury very much, and they say she has always such a brilliant society around her, that—that—"

"That you wished to enjoy it;—all very natural. But I do not admire Mrs. Mabury, Evelyn: she is too artificial for my taste. Do not become like her, I pray you."

"Like her! I like Mrs. Mabury!"—and a laugh full of mirth and music rang forth, which called an elderly gentleman to the piazza, just as two riders entered at full canter the gate leading into the courtyard. One of these riders was a lady, and the very Mrs. Mabury who had just been named; and certainly few persons could have looked less like the girlish and sylph-like Evelyn Beresford than the elegant woman, the full yet admirable proportions of whose form were displayed to the greatest advantage by her closely-fitting riding-habit.

As she approached the house, she reined in her horse very suddenly, and seemed about to spring from the saddle without assistance. If this was a feint, it served to show

that her companion was at least as fearless a rider as herself, for, without checking in the slightest degree the speed of his horse, he leaped to the ground, and was at her side before she could extricate her foot from the stirrup.

If Mrs. Mabury's general aspect was little like Evelyn at a distance, a nearer and more minute examination of her person and features did not increase the resemblance. With hair and eyes of jet, her complexion was of that clear olive, which marks the Spanish donna, yet so richly colored, that, to use the poet's simple and beautiful simile,—

> "Her cheek was like the Catherine pear,
> The side that's next the sun."

The character of her brow, of her large and brilliant black eyes, and more than slightly aquiline nose, was proud, and might have been thought unfeminine, had they not been softened by the rich swell of the lips, the beautifully-moulded chin, and the bewitching dimples, which, when she smiled or spoke, played around her mouth. Her youth had already passed, for she had been eight years a wife and five a widow; but time had only matured her charms, passing over her so gently, that he had left no line upon her brow, nor marked one of her raven tresses with his frosty touch.

In the appearance of her companion there seemed, to the casual observer, nothing worthy of special notice; yet there were few who looked on Euston Hastings without turning to look again; and the vain effort of the mind to decide in what his attraction lay, but caused him to occupy the attention more surely. His person was under the middle size, and his features plain, yet command seemed stamped upon his aspect. The physiognomist declared that the secret of his power lay in his dark and deep-set eye, and in the firmly-compressed lips, which told of an indomitable

will. The phrenologist placed it in the contour of his head, with its broad and high forehead. The artist saw it in the noble position of that head, and in the consummate ease and grace of every movement.

Before Mrs. Mabury had dismounted, Everard Irving had withdrawn from the piazza, leaving Mr. Beresford and his daughter to receive their guests. Their salutations were returned with easy, friendly gayety by Mrs. Mabury—with grave and distant courtesy by Mr. Hastings.

"Well, you have not repented your promise to lend me your pet for a while," said Mrs. Mabury, as she shook hands with Mr. Beresford.

"No, no; I fear the repentance will be on your side when you find out what a plague she is."

The fond expression with which Mr. Beresford's eyes rested on the smiling face of his child, and the caressing movement with which he passed his hand over her head, contradicted his words.

"I have made engagements of all sorts for her," continued Mrs. Mabury.

"Of all sorts?" inquired Mr. Beresford, playfully.

"Except matrimonial—that I leave for herself; but such numerous and pressing engagements, that we have not a moment to spare: so get ready, love—but stay, will you ride with us, or shall I return with you in your carriage?"

"As you please," said Evelyn.

"Nay, nay; it shall be as you please in all things while you are with me."

"You will spoil her, I fear, Mrs. Mabury."

"Spoil myself rather, Mr. Beresford; for do you not see it will save me all the trouble of thinking. I shall only have to ask what Evelyn wishes, and decide accordingly. Now, then, Evelyn, do we ride or drive?"

"If I thought you were not fatigued with the ride you

have already taken," Evelyn began, but Mrs. Mabury interrupted her, exclaiming, "Not in the least—not in the least! riding is the only thing of which I never tire; so don your habit."

"And while she is doing so," said Mr. Beresford, "you and Mr. Hastings will walk in and partake of some refreshments. We have still some peaches and grapes here, which, though they may not rival those of Italy, are very fair for America, as an English gentleman informed me a few days since."

We will leave Evelyn to prepare for her ride, and Mr. Beresford to entertain his guests with somewhat of the ceremonious politeness of "the olden time," while we return to the young man who has been introduced to us as Mr. Everard Irving, and who, it may be remembered, withdrew from the piazza at the approach of Mrs. Mabury and Mr. Hastings. Passing on to the opposite extremity of the hall, he paused before a door on his left hand, and knocked gently at it.

"Come in," cried a low and seemingly feeble voice, and he entered.

Reclining on a couch near a window, enveloped in a large shawl, was a young girl who had probably seen some eighteen or nineteen summers. If we could convey to the reader any idea of the singular loveliness of this being, we should be assured of his pardon for adding another to the many sketches which have already given to this chapter something of the character of a portrait gallery. Yet lovely as she was, there was that in her appearance which painfully affected the heart of the gazer, reminding him that earth's loveliest things are often the most fleeting. A slight tinge of pink had risen to her cheek at the entrance of Everard Irving, but it faded even while she was receiving his greeting, leaving her whole face of the pure Parian tint. Her hair,

which was black as night, was drawn entirely off the beautiful forehead and temples, and being gathered into massy folds at the back of the head, was confined there with a small comb. The features were severely classical; but there was a languor in the dreamy gray eye, and about the lovely mouth, which told of suffering not less surely than did the perfectly colorless complexion.

Everard advanced to her with a countenance full of affectionate interest, and taking her hand, said tenderly, "I hope you are better, dear Mary, for I cannot bear to leave you when you are suffering."

"You go this morning, then?" she inquired, as her hand, which had neither been given nor withdrawn, fell from his clasp.

"Yes, I intended doing so, unless," he added slowly, "you wish me to remain."

"Oh, no," she answered quickly, "I have no such wish: on the contrary, I would rather you would not come again till Evelyn returns; it fatigues me to entertain visiters."

"Entertain visiters! Oh, Mary, do not speak to me so coldly. I am sad enough already, without any new trial; and I shall indeed think it right to distrust all love, if that of my earliest friend—my sister—can change so suddenly and so causelessly."

The whole manner of the young girl underwent an instant and complete alteration. Resting on his the hand which she had before only permitted him to take, she said, in tones of thrilling tenderness, and with eyes full of tears, "Forgive me, dear Everard, suffering makes me peevish; but I did not know that you were sad: tell me what has made you so." She paused, but observing some embarrassment in his countenance, immediately resumed, with a vain effort at playfulness. "Has Evelyn frowned upon you this morning?"

Everard pressed her hand affectionately, and continued to hold it between both his as he said, with an embarrassed laugh, "No; I am almost ashamed to acknowledge, even to you, that it is Evelyn's smiles which disturb me this morning."

"Does she smile upon another, then?"

"No; but to speak plainly, she is so happy, so joyous at this visit to the city, that—I fear I know not what."

"I find that love as well as guilt makes cowards of us. Why, Everard, she is doubtless pleased for your sake; she is going to the place in which you live."

"No, no, Mary; she has been frank enough to acknowledge that this is not all, and I am clear-sighted enough to perceive that it is but a small part of her promised pleasure. She will soon be surrounded with admirers, and as her father persists in forbidding any engagement between us for a year, (as if a year could make Evelyn so much wiser or better able to judge for herself,) my visits and attentions to her will be on the same footing with those of others, and I may be compelled to see her whom I have thought my own, wooed and——this is too tyrannous in Mr. Beresford—I have been too submissive to his will—I will yet win from Evelyn a promise to become mine when this year of probation is at an end."

As Everard uttered these last words, he relinquished the hand of his companion, and starting from his seat, walked hurriedly across the room, as if to give vent to his impatience by motion. He returned, however, as rapidly, and then Mary said, "I doubt not, Everard, that Evelyn would make the promise you require; but you will not ask it, I am sure."

"And why not?"

"First, because you promised Mr. Beresford that you would not."

"It was a promise he should never have exacted. What great change can take place in Evelyn in one year?"

"If in that year Evelyn remain unchanged, Everard, any promise would be needless; if she should change, you would not desire to hold by a promise, the heart no longer yours."

This was a statement too true to be disputed; but there are some moods of the mind in which truth is the most irritating of all things. Such was now the mood of Everard Irving, and with an impatience which belonged to his impetuous nature, but which he had rarely manifested to the gentle being at his side, he replied, "All very reasonable, and very proper too, I doubt not. I am sorry that I am not just now sufficiently cool and calm to appreciate it. You, who never knew the fears and doubts of love, can scarcely be expected to sympathize with my folly."

An expression of the keenest anguish passed over the face of the girl, and pressing her hand to her side as if she had felt the pang there, she closed her eyes, and laid her head back upon the pillows of her couch. Everard had not looked at her while speaking, but her change of position attracted his attention; and as he saw the suffering depicted in her face, he leaned tenderly over her, and said, "Forgive me, Mary, for disturbing you with my waywardness. I am like a fretful child this morning; but we will speak of this no more."

"Nay, Everard, not so; to whom should you speak, if not to me? If I have not known love," she added, with a bitter smile, "I have at least learned to sympathize with sorrow."

He replied only by a pressure of her hand, and they were both silent for a few minutes. She was the first to speak again.

"Do you know any thing," she asked, "of this Mrs. Mabury, between whom and Evelyn such a sudden intimacy seems to have arisen?"

"But little, and that little does not inspire me with confidence. She married, when very young, a man much older than herself, whose wealth was thought by others to be his chief attraction. Going abroad immediately on her widowhood, she spent five years in France and Italy, and only returned a month ago to America, in consequence of a lawsuit which involved a large part of the fortune left her by Mr. Mabury. You smile, and I acknowledge that these are not very serious causes of dissatisfaction with her as a *chaperone* for Evelyn; but against the companion she has brought back with her, and in whose society she passed, I am told, much of her time abroad, I have graver and more decided objections."

"Of whom do you speak?"

"Of this Euston Hastings. He, they say, went abroad at twenty, in consequence of some disappointment of the heart. If it were so, it is well to preserve the remembrance as a proof that he once had a heart, for I greatly doubt if there is such a thing in his organism now. He is the most cold, hard, derisive being I have ever met."

"Evelyn's association with him will certainly not inflict on you the pangs of jealousy; for you cannot anticipate danger to her affections from the attractions of such a man."

"I have described Euston Hastings to you as he has impressed me; but there are those who will tell you that there is about him a singular and irresistible charm. I have never seen him smile except to sneer, and have scarcely heard him speak except to ridicule; but I have heard others say that his smile was beautiful, and that when he was in the vein for it, his conversation was inexpressibly fascinating. He has spent fifteen years abroad. I wish he had stayed there one year longer."

"Is he not engaged to Mrs. Mabury, think you?"

"It is generally so believed, because they returned together, and he is always seen at her side; but if so, why are they not married? They are both free, both independent in fortune. But I am unjust to myself in suffering you to believe that I object to Evelyn's association with Eustor. Hastings from a lover's jealousy. I should in reality dislike it almost as much were he the husband of Mrs. Mabury; for, if I have not been misinformed, he is a scoffer at all things pure and holy."

"Have you told Mr. Beresford this?"

"I have; but Mr. Beresford at fifty knows no more of the world than a child. He has lived in his books alone. He replied to my information, that he seldom believed hearsay reports against any one, and that if this were true, he was assured that a libertine and an infidel could acquire no influence over his pure-hearted and religious Evelyn. When I would have urged him farther, he silenced me by his raillery, declaring that I must be jealous as a Turk if I was unwilling to see Evelyn associate with a man almost twice her age, grave and silent as a priest, and ugly enough to be any thing."

"Mr. Beresford is right," said Mary, after a few moments of silence; "Evelyn is both pure-hearted and religious—"

"She is, indeed," interrupted Everard, "or I should not love her as I do; but, Mary, Evelyn is wholly a creature of the affections. Her impulses are pure, her heart is full of worship, but she is as wax in the hands of those she loves: their approbation and affection is the aim of her being; and she submits to their wishes, and receives their opinions without a question."

"Then, Everard, since she loves you, you should feel secure."

"But may not new attachments displace her present ones?"

Mary shook her head, but before she could reply in words, there was a slight tap at the door, and Evelyn entered, habited for her ride. Advancing to the couch, she kissed Mary's cheek, and said, "Dear Mary, you are the only one I grieve to leave behind me; but it is only for a fortnight, and I will see you very often, every day if I can."

"Thank you, Evelyn, you are very kind; but you must not let me interfere with pleasanter engagements."

"Do not call them pleasanter: there are none pleasanter than being with you."

"Gayer, then," said Mary, with a faint smile. "Your father and my good nurse," she added, "will, you know, take all possible care of me; so be as happy as you can, and I will have pleasure in thinking of yours."

"You will not blame me, then, as some other people have done, for being happy;" and Evelyn glanced at Everard Irving with the pretty pout of a vexed child, though, as she met his eye, a blush rose to her cheek, betokening more womanly emotion.

"Nay, nay, Evelyn," said Everard, as he caught her hand, and spite of her slight resistance, raised it to his lips; "that is only half the truth; and every lawyer will tell you that no witness is so unjust as he who speaks but half the truth."

"You will keep Mrs. Mabury waiting, Evelyn," said Mary, hurriedly.

"Good-by, then, dear, dear Mary. Take care of yourself, if you would have me enjoy my visit; for if I hear you are ill, I shall come directly back.

Evelyn twined her arms around Mary's neck, and kissed her again and again, then held her hand to Everard.

"We do not part here, Evelyn. I shall ride with you."

"With Mrs. Mabury's permission; so come and make

your court to her," said Evelyn, as she tripped lightly away.

"Already, you see—Mrs. Mabury's permission!" repeated Everard bitterly. Then taking a hasty leave of the invalid, he followed Evelyn from the room. As the door closed upon him, Mary clasped her hands over her eyes, and lay for several minutes quite still. Tears began to steal from beneath those almost transparent fingers; but suddenly her sad thoughts were interrupted by gay laughter and the clattering of horses' hoofs. Springing from her pillow, she threw up the sash beside her, and looked out. Her room was in the rear of the house, yet from this window the road was visible for a few yards, as it made a sudden detour beyond the gate, and there she saw the gay party of riders as they swept rapidly by on their way to the city. The breeze again wafted back to her the sounds of careless glee; and as one well-known voice rang on her ear, she hastily drew down the sash, and exclaimed wildly, "Father!—mother! would that I too were laid in peace beside you!"

Alas! for the young heart which feels itself alone on earth, yet has not learned to rise above the earth! which looks to impassive death and the dark grave for the peace that can come only from life—ever-active, beneficent life—and the light-giving heavens!

CHAPTER II.

"Oh how bitter a thing it is to look into happiness through another's eyes!"

As You Like It.

Mr. Beresford had married after thirty a young and beautiful girl, whom he loved truly and tenderly. Truly and tenderly was he loved in return; yet when, shortly after the birth of Evelyn, Mr. Beresford bent over the dying bed of his wife, he felt, with a bitterness which only such circumstances can impart, that to her the brief period of their married life had not been all brightness. His nature was still and serene, his emotions deep but not vehement. She was ardent and impassioned, loving with her whole being, and requiring to be so loved in return. She never doubted her husband's truth, never feared that any other could come into competition with her in his heart, yet she had an object of painful jealousy. Mr. Beresford was a student, and she was jealous of the books which absorbed so much of his time, and which, till he saw her, had satisfied all his desires for companionship. She felt that there were thoughts which he never expressed to her—emotions with which he claimed not her sympathy, and these the thoughts and emotions which he considered the highest and noblest portion of his being. Had she lived longer, it is possible that she might have gained courage to express all her feelings on this subject, and that Mr. Beresford would have learned from actual life what his books had never taught him—that woman was not intended solely as an embellishment to the life of man; that, however they may have been neglected

or even repressed by her education, she has aspirations as high, desires as vast as he, and powers fitting her at least to follow his lead, and sympathize with his noblest efforts. To have guided this young, ardent, loving spirit through the wide field of thought, whose paths were new to her and familiar to him; to have guarded her from the delusions of error; to have unveiled to her earnest gaze the truths that had made life bright and clear to him, would have given to Mr. Beresford a happiness of which he had not dreamed. Marriage had been regarded by him as a union of hearts indeed, but not of the whole being. It was rather, in respect to mind, a compromise, in which he agreed to relinquish somewhat of his intellectual enjoyment in exchange for dearer delights. When on seeking her after hours of lonely study, he found his wife—gentle and affectionate indeed, for she was too amiable and loved too truly to be otherwise—but sad, and oftentimes bearing on her cheeks the traces of tears, he would urge her going more into society, would sacrifice his own tastes to go with her, and to gather around her in her own abode the gayeties to which she had been accustomed; he would do any thing, every thing, except endeavor to bring her mind into companionship with his, for this he supposed little likely to please a gay, graceful, accomplished woman.

Mr. Beresford never discovered his mistake; he only felt, as we have already said, even while his Evelyn was breathing out upon his bosom her gratitude for his constant tenderness, that he had failed to make this, the most loving and gentle and best-beloved of God's creatures, happy. This conviction was never removed from his mind; and when, in after years, friends spoke to him of the expediency of giving to the little Evelyn another mother, it perhaps influenced his rejection of their counsel scarcely less than his tender memory of the dead.

Evelyn inherited her mother's loving nature. She would sit for hours at her father's feet, occupied with her childish sports, and satisfied with the smile with which he would sometimes turn from the most interesting page to regard her, or with the caressing hand that played among her soft ringlets as she rested her head against his knee. It was soon perceived by her attendants that the rewards and punishments most powerfully influencing her were those addressed to her affections, and "Everybody will love you," or "Nobody will care for you," early became the highest sanctions of her code of morals. In her education, Mr. Beresford had suffered her wishes to guide him in all save absolute essentials.

The love of music was like all other love with her, a passion, and her voice was sweet and clear and flexible, like the notes of a bird. In this art she had had the highest cultivation that could be obtained for her. For the rest, she was neither ignorant nor learned. Her reflective powers had been little exercised, but her perceptions were so quick and clear, that she often reached at once, and as if by intuition, the point at which others arrived only by slow and laborious induction. At seventeen she united the frank confidingness, and sometimes perhaps a little of the wilfulness, of a child to the sensitive delicacy of a woman. Her heart was, as Everard Irving had said, full of worship, and her religious faith as simple and unquestioning as when she had lisped her morning and evening prayer, with an awed yet loving spirit, at her father's knee. It would be scarcely an exaggeration to say that her worship extended to her father himself, who was in her eyes the most exalted as well as the dearest of earthly beings, whose opinions were her criteria of right, whose will was her rule of action. One want alone had Evelyn felt in her past life—the want of a companion whose age and tastes assimilated with hers,

who would tend, with her, her birds and flowers, listen to her fancies and communicate her own: and Mary Raymond had been welcomed by her with a thousand joyful anticipations that she would supply this want. But Mary came with a sorrowing heart, and an enfeebled frame. The birds and flowers, the bright sunshine and brighter fancies in which Evelyn delighted, would have seemed a mockery to the heart yet lingering beside the grave of her just-buried father, and among the silent and deserted scenes of her early home.

Mr. Raymond, the father of Mary, had been one of Mr. Beresford's earliest and most intimate friends. When Mary was about six years old he had removed to Baltimore, with the hope that a residence in a warmer climate might restore the enfeebled health of his wife. He was not disappointed in this hope. Under the mild influences of a southern sky, her constitution regained its former vigor, and she continued for ten years longer to share the prosperity and honor which Mr. Raymond's eminence as a lawyer, and high-toned character as a man, won for him in his new home. Mary was little more than sixteen, when a fever suddenly terminated her mother's life. The tie between them had been unusually tender and strong, for Mrs. Raymond, an intellectual and accomplished woman, had been herself the instructress of her daughter: and little do those know, who yield this sacred office to another, how large a portion of reverence and love they relinquish.

Even at sixteen, Mary Raymond proved herself no common character by the energy with which she struggled with her own heavy sorrow at her mother's death; and the tact with which she unobtrusively, yet perseveringly and successfully, exerted herself to win her father back to life and to her from the contemplation of his own bereavement. But when, two years later, the death of that cherished father

left her home desolate, and with only Everard Irving of all whom she had known and loved in earlier life, she came to the dwelling of strangers, her strength seemed for a time to have departed from her, and her health gave way.

Everard Irving, orphaned in his infancy, had been a ward of Mr. Raymond, and had spent most of his life under the same roof with Mary. When Everard left home for college they parted as brothers and sisters part. From this time their intercourse had been more interrupted. Everard had too much energy of character, too much of that thirst for action which almost always accompanies a high order of mind, to be contented with the life of an idle gentleman, and immediately on the completion of his collegiate course, he entered on the study of the law. He had wished to do this under the supervision of his guardian, but there were reasons which induced Mr. Raymond to decide otherwise. Everard inherited property which lay principally in New York, and as this property was every year increasing in value, it seemed desirable that he should select that place for his future residence and the scene of his professional career. He must therefore seek admission to the courts of that State as a legal practitioner, and to obtain it his legal education must be conducted there. But his removal did not sever the ties which connected young Irving with the friends of his childhood. Every long intermission from study was spent with them; Mr. Raymond acquainted himself from time to time with his progress as a law student, attended his legal examination, and welcomed him to the bench of barristers with somewhat of a father's pride in his success. With Mary he kept up the epistolary correspondence which had been commenced between them when he was at college. This correspondence retained on his part all its original frankness. The plans, prospects, and desires of the man were communicated with no less freedom than

the sports and graver pursuits of the boy had been. How was it with Mary?

Everard's first visit after his removal to New York had been made when he was just twenty-one, and Mary was approaching her sixteenth birthday. As usual, she was the first to greet him with warm, unblushing affection. It had ever been her pleasure, when he was at *home*, as he called Mr. Raymond's house, to care, as a loving sister should, for his wants,—to put his books in order, fill his inkstand, decorate his room with his favorite flowers, and minister to his enjoyment by a thousand delicate attentions. Going one morning to perform some of these kindly offices in the room which he called his study, while she knew him to be absent with her father, she approached his open desk to put aside the papers which he had left exposed. An unfinished letter lay there. Mary raised the lid of the desk, placed the letter within, and was about to close it when her eye rested on her own name, and before a thought could rise to rebuke the heedless impulse, she had read, "I must enter a writ of error in the court of scandal against your raillery on the subject of my love for Mary Raymond. I do love her, and well I may, for she is the loveliest and gentlest sister man was ever blessed with; but she is my sister, at least the remembrances of my childhood will ever make me regard her as such. As a proof of this, if you need one, I will promise to introduce you to her, and to do my best to win for you the highest place in her heart, whenever you shall claim my good offices; and this, be it known to you, is no slight proof of my regard, for she is in truth a noble girl, and few, in my opinion, deserve such a treasure."

With a countenance deeply thoughtful, Mary stood motionless beside the unclosed desk, till roused by the opening of the street door and the sound of her father's voice. Everard might be with him, and rapid as thought, impelled

by feelings which she did not herself understand, she started from her trance, placed the letter again exactly as she had found it, and stole to her own room with the cautious yet hurried movement of guilt. The whole of this day Mary was miserable—conscious of a resentment towards Everard which she could not banish even while she felt its injustice. "Am I so greedy of praise that it is not enough for me to be called lovely and gentle and noble, a treasure which few deserve?" she asked herself, and the next moment blamed Everard for introducing her name in a letter to a stranger, termed it a levity and disrespect with which for her father's sake he should not have treated her, and with a proud elevation of her head and a flashing eye, resolved that as she was no longer a child she would no longer admit from him the familiarity of their childhood—he should at least respect her. Again her mood changed to a vague, undefined sadness, under the influence of which the proud head drooped and the bright eyes were dimmed with tears.

"What is the matter, Mary?" asked Everard when they next met, as he watched with surprise the color that rapidly flushed and faded in her cheek, and her determinately downcast eyes.

"Nothing," she murmured with an averted face.

"Nothing! nay, Mary, something is the matter," and catching her hand as she would have passed him, he drew her towards him, adding with his usual affectionate freedom, "Come here and tell me what it is."

Mary strove to extricate her hand from his clasp, to resist the impulse with which he would have drawn her to his side, and when she found her efforts vain, burst into tears. Surprised and shocked, Everard dropped her hand, and in an instant she darted from the room, leaving him in the utmost astonishment at such demonstrations from one usually calm, gentle, and confiding. A night passed before they

had another interview, and then Mary, though somewhat still and grave, was so nearly her usual self that Everard readily believed some passing indisposition had occasioned her late singular mood. Yet, thenceforth, he was at times conscious that a change had come over their intercourse. Mary was as kind as formerly, but there was about her a stillness, a slight reserve, a something which made him compare her in his imagination to a veiled picture, and this reserve extended itself to her part of their correspondence. When, however, three years after, he learned Mr. Raymond's sudden death from the family physician, and hastened to Mary with a heart almost as bereaved as her own, the veil was removed, and all seemed forgotten by her save that he was the only one left on earth who had shared the joys and soothed the sorrows of her childhood. There was such a touching expression of tender entreaty in her eyes, such gentle submission in her manner, that Everard loved her as he had never loved before. He hovered around her with anxious tenderness, and till he had seen her enter her new home could not persuade himself to resign her even to Mr. Beresford, to whose guardianship her father's will had consigned her, and who had hastened to conduct her to his house on learning the death of Mr. Raymond.

By Evelyn Mary was received as a dear sister. Her bounding step grew quiet, her song was hushed, and her mirthful voice became more gentle, and assumed even a touch of sadness in sympathy with the mourner. Mary became ill, and Evelyn tended her with a watchful, untiring devotion that completely won the heart of the black woman who had been Mary's nurse in childhood, and had accompanied her from Baltimore. When the violence of the disease abated, and only the feebleness it had left confined Mary to her couch, Everard, whose daily visits since her illness had been only visits of inquiry, was admitted to her

apartment, and shared with Evelyn in her tender assiduities. To cheer the sufferer by gentle converse, or read to her from some loved page was Everard's task, while Evelyn would sing to her in the softest, sweetest notes that ever were breathed from gentle and loving lips—would bring her her favorite flowers, or cull for her the finest fruits and claim a smile as her reward. Affectionate and sensitive as Mary was, she had none of that morbid sensibility, that selfish egotism, which would have made her close her heart against all the kindly influences surrounding her, and seclude herself within the sombre chamber of her own melancholy imagery, shutting out the returning beams of hope. The graves of her father and mother were sacred shrines to which, through life, her thoughts would make frequent and reverent pilgrimage; but she could not be all unblest while her hand was clasped affectionately in that of the loved companion of her childhood, and her wishes anticipated with such endearing sweetness as was evinced by Evelyn. Her cheek began to wear the softest tinge of color; and her smile, if not joyous as in other days, was more tender than sad. Though she had not yet attempted to walk out, she sat in the piazza during the summer evenings, inhaling, with all that delight which the convalescent feels, the perfumes wafted to her on every passing breeze, watching the sunset clouds, and listening to nature's own sweet minstrelsy. She was of late often alone at this hour, for then Everard best loved a stroll through the grove or on the river's bank, but not a solitary stroll, and assured by Mary that she could not feel lonely while surrounded by objects which made every sense a minister of joy, Evelyn listened to his pleadings and almost always accompanied him. It was thus one balmy evening in August that they wandered forth together. Mary saw them go with a smile, having planned what she was assured would be an agreeable surprise to them.

"How long will you be gone this evening?" she asked, as they were descending the steps.

Everard looked upward to the sun and then answered, "Half an hour—we will just receive the sun's farewell glance and be with you again."

"Can you sit here so long without fatigue?" asked the careful Evelyn.

"Oh yes! but do not stay longer—just half an hour."

"We will be punctual as the sun himself," gayly exclaimed Evelyn, as kissing her hand she bounded down the steps. They were soon lost to Mary's view, for the path they had entered wound through a thick grove of beech and hickory, now in full foliage, to the river's brink.

Lovely indeed is the scene that meets the eye of him who stands on that bank at sunset hour, when the placid stream at his feet glows with the glittering hues of evening. Vessels with their snowy sails are moving gracefully hither and thither, but, between those expanded sails, he catches glimpses of the opposite shore. As he follows that shore north, it grows loftier and loftier, till it terminates in the bold palisades; and as he turns south, his eye rests on Hoboken's softer beauty and the green summit of Weehawken.

"This is a scene of which I am never weary," exclaimed Everard as they reached the bank, "there is in it at once so much repose and so much life—the shadowy grove around us, before us the still waters and the verdant shore, and then the vessels gliding gracefully by and the steamer hurrying on its way."

"That last I would gladly dispense with, it is out of harmony with the rest," said Evelyn.

"It makes the whole more life-like."

"An unlovely life, I should think it, with its smoke and din. I should long to flee away from such a life—to be a spirit of air and lie on such a couch as yonder purple cloud

canopied with gold. I would float over earth's fair scenes, and hover within hearing of its sweet sounds—of sabbath bells and rushing streams and sighing winds, of chirping insects and warbling birds; but I would rise far, far away when a steamer was coming," and Evelyn laughed gayly at her own wild fancies and their prosaic termination.

Never had she seemed so lovely in the eyes of Everard. She had worn no bonnet, for none was needed at so late an hour, and the western breeze blew back her glittering ringlets from a face in which childlike glee mingled with an expression of sweetness and purity that might have suited the spiritual being she described.

"And could you leave us, Evelyn?" he asked, with almost unconscious tenderness in his tone.

Whether it was this tone or the glance which she met at that moment we know not, but it was with a heightened color and a quick embarrassed manner that Evelyn replied, "Oh, I would visit you often, and discourse to you in eloquent music of my aerial home and its pleasures—shall I sing you one of my spirit songs now?"

"Do," said Everard, scarcely expecting her prompt compliance; but Evelyn, whose passing embarrassment was already forgotten, without a moment's hesitation warbled out in her sweet, clear tones, which made each word as distinct as if spoken,—

I.

'My home is of the ether blue
That lines the glowing vault of Heaven,
Curtained with clouds of every hue
That decks the gorgeous West at even.

II.

"Above the earth afar—afar,
I sail in this my spirit-home,
And I have won one glorious star
With me the fields of air to roam.

"Can you wonder I love such a home as that?" asked Evelyn playfully, turning to Everard with an arch smile as she concluded.

He gazed on her with passionate admiration as he murmured in reply, "Ah! Evelyn, Undine left her spirit-home for a human love, and we should win you back to us; spite of your glorious star."

"If you did, I should pine away, and my song would be sad—listen to it:" and to a melancholy air she chanted slowly,—

I.

"I long from this darksome world to fly
To my home in yonder azure sky.
As I watch its stars, I strive and strain
To fling from my soul the earth-fiend's chain,
But its hated links must clasp me round,
Till a mightier will than his be found
To set my struggling spirit free.

II.

"A star shed down its silvery light
On my pearly couch in Heaven each night;
And well, by its beam serene and clear,
I knew the spirit I loved was near.
Oh! for one gleam of his cheering ray,
To drive earth's dark'ning shades away,
And set my struggling spirit free."

Before he could speak, the gay smile was again on her lip, and changing the air to one of triumphant joy, she sang,—

I.

"Star of my life! again—again,
Thy radiant beams are round me poured,
My struggling soul has burst its chain,
And now, like a joyous bird, I've soared,
Upborne by thy mysterious power,
To my home of bliss—my heavenly bower.

II

"Its flowers are fresh with the dews of night,
Its clouds are bright with the sun's last gleam,
And there I sport in thy golden light
And win new strength from thy every beam,
Or sail on the winds in a cloudy car,
With thee for my guide—my glorious star!

"What say you now, would you bind the poor spirit down to earth?"

Softened by the hour and the scene, there was a spell in her airy grace, her music, her innocent childlike freedom, which never for a moment trenched on the gentleness or the delicacy of the woman, which Everard could not resist. She had stolen insensibly into his heart as a lovely, endearing child; she now ruled there as an engaging woman. With an impetuosity that marked his character, he yielded at once to his ardent impulses and exclaimed, "Nay, Evelyn, but I would win her to become the star of my home—may it be so, loveliest, dearest? without you, my life will be lone and dark as that of the exiled spirit."

He would have taken her hand, but bewildered, abashed, Evelyn shrank from him.

"I have offended you, Evelyn," he exclaimed with passionate sorrow.

"Oh no—no, Mr. Irving, I am not offended."

"Do you love another, then?" and his tones were low and sad.

"No—no," whispered Evelyn, "but I—I scarcely understand you, Mr. Irving—I never thought of this—I am so young."

"Not too young to love and to be loved, dearest. Have you never longed for a companion, Evelyn, who should sympathize with you more fully than any one has yet done, and who, taught by that sweet sympathy, should anticipate

your wishes, share your joys, and soothe your sorrows ere they were spoken? Do you not wish for such another self, dear Evelyn?"

Evelyn listened with surprise; he seemed to have read her heart, and to be interpreting its inmost desires; and her countenance full of interest, her hand which no longer resisted his clasp, gave the assent which her tongue refused to utter.

"You have, dearest—I see you have," continued Everard, joyously; "and it is to be such a companion that I sue. Confide in me, dear Evelyn, and thus will I sympathize with your joy, and shelter you in my very heart from every sorrow from which the tenderest love can guard you. Speak, dear Evelyn, or at least give me one encouraging look! Turn not away thy beam, star of my life!"

The impetuosity with which Everard had first spoken had startled his companion, but now his tones were low and gentle, his manner composed though earnest. It had been a powerful effort thus to subdue himself, but he was rewarded for it. Evelyn no longer shrank from him; her hand rested in his, and, at his last appeal, a smile played on her lip, and she turned on him for an instant a glance full of tenderness. Everard resisted the impulse to fold her in his arms, lest he should scare away the timid love which he believed to be just nestling in her heart, and contented himself with pressing her hand to his lips, and drawing it affectionately through his arm as he said, "Beloved! my life's devotion shall repay you for this moment."

Those words, so gentle and so sweet to Evelyn, reached other ears than hers, and fell, alas! like a crushing weight on another heart.

The anxiety of her friends had prevented Mary's attempting to exert herself so much as the consciousness of returning strength would have prompted. She had the earnest desire to be abroad which usually accompanies convales-

cence; and this evening she had determined to surprise Evelyn and Everard by meeting them on their return home. Twenty minutes after they had left her, she wrapped her shawl around her, and descending the steps, pursued the same path which they had taken. She went slowly, lingeringly, hoping each moment to see them approaching; but they came not, and unwilling to be disappointed of her promised pleasure, with many a pause for rest and breath, she went on and on till the river lay before her, and there on its brink stood Everard and Evelyn, with their faces towards the setting sun, and turned away from her. She drew near them with stealthy steps, hoping to make their surprise complete by putting her hand upon them ere they were aware of her presence. She is now quite near; a playful smile is on her lip at the thought of the sensation she is about to produce. The westerly breeze wafts to her the low deep tones, the very words in which Everard makes that pledge of his life's devotion. The smile vanishes; her brow contracts with an expression of pain; her pallid lips are pressed together as if to stifle a cry; and turning, she moves as stealthily, but far less lingeringly, and with no pause for rest, back to the house.

About an hour after, as Mr. Beresford was sitting at the western window of his study, reading by the light cast from a glowing sky, an open hand, delicately small and fair, was placed upon the page before him. It was a page in which he was deeply interested, yet the interruption did not displease him; and even while he exclaimed, "Away with you, saucy imp, you are the plague of my life!" he took that little hand, and leaning back his head, looked affectionately up at the glowing face that bent over his shoulder.

"Where have you been this afternoon?" he asked, as drawing Evelyn forward, he placed her on his knee.

She colored slightly as she repeated his question—"Where have I been?" and then answered by singing playfully,

"I've been roaming—I've been roaming
Over hill and over plain."

"And where has your friend Mary been while you were roaming, pert one?"

"Mary!" exclaimed Evelyn, with sudden recollection of her promise to her friend; "oh! I left her sitting in the piazza, and she promised to sit there till we returned; but I believe we were away longer than we intended, and I suppose she must have grown tired of waiting, and gone to her room."

"And who is the other person included in *we?*" asked Mr. Beresford, smilingly; "for I presume you do not intend to adopt the royal style of expression."

"Mr. Irving was with me," said Evelyn simply, looking out of the window.

"Mr. Irving!—By-the-by, Evelyn, I think it would be as well for you sometimes to leave your friend and Mr. Irving alone together. I am much mistaken if such attentions as his spring not from a warmer source than friendship, and situated as she is, poor thing! I shall be heartily glad to see her married to a worthy man."

Evelyn bowed her forehead on her father's shoulder, but not before he had seen the crimson which flushed quickly over its pearly tint.

"Silly child!" said Mr. Beresford, "you could not blush more if I was suspecting Mr. Irving of being in love with you. But where are you going?" he asked, as Evelyn rose, and tried to remove the arm that detained her.

"I must see how Mary is. I have not seen her since I came in."

"Well, go," said Mr. Beresford, liberating her, "and tell her that if she will take her tea with us, she shall have a seat at my side, and I will take care of her."

Evelyn went, but scarcely a minute had passed ere she returned with sorrow in her looks.

"Oh, father!" she exclaimed, "Mary is ill again. I am sure she must be very ill; for Betty will not let me go in the room, and says herself that she thinks Mary must be delirious, for that she has ordered her not to let anybody come in: surely she cannot mean to keep me out!" and tears of wounded feeling rose to Evelyn's eyes.

"If she does, my love," said Mr. Beresford, soothingly, "it can only be because she is, as Betty thinks, delirious. But we will send for Dr. Huntly—she will not refuse to see him. Has Mr. Irving returned to the city?"

"No, he is in the parlor;" and Evelyn colored again as she remembered on what subject he was waiting to converse with her father. She did not accompany Mr. Beresford to the parlor. His rapid announcement of Mary's state left Everard no time for his communication; and when that announcement had been received, all selfish emotions were forgotten in solicitude for her; and the haste with which he galloped off to the city, that he might send Dr. Huntly to her without a moment's delay, was very gratifying to Mr. Beresford's benevolent interest in his young ward's future happiness. Within an hour Mary's kind old physician, Dr. Huntly, stood beside her bed. She was in a raging fever, and continued vehemently to refuse admittance to all others. As opposition greatly increased her fever, Dr. Huntly advised perfect submission to her wishes, though Evelyn wept with passionate sorrow at being separated from her. A servant had seen Mary returning from her walk, and Dr. Huntly declared that to that walk she was indebted for her relapse. "It was madness," he said, "to go

out at so late an hour." After hovering for several days between life and death, her excellent constitution again conquered; and though reduced to the feebleness of infancy, she was declared out of danger.

When Evelyn was again admitted to Mary's apartment, shocked at the altered appearance of her friend, and full of tender emotions to which her promises to be very quiet forbade her to give full expression, she sat silently caressing Mary's hand, and occasionally pressing her lips to her brow, while the glistening of her own eyes, and the quivering of her lip, showed with what difficulty she restrained her tears. Mary too was silent; but no glad or grateful emotion was visible in her pallid face, nor did a single pressure of her thin and almost transparent fingers respond to her friend's caresses. She lay with closed eyes as still and seemingly as insensible as the marble statue she resembled, till Dr. Huntly's arrival put an end to the interview. As the agitated Evelyn withdrew from the room, even before the door could be closed upon her, her sobs burst forth, and with that convulsive sound was mingled the tones of a manly voice soothing her sorrow. It was the voice of Everard Irving, whose anxiety for both the friends had kept him hovering near the door. As these sounds met Mary's ear, her insensibility vanished, her pale cheek flushed, and large tears stole from her closed eyes. She regained her health much more slowly than she had before done, and not as then did her cheerfulness seem to return with it. It was many days before she was able to sit, supported by pillows, on the couch which she occupied when first introduced to the reader. When there, she could no longer refuse to receive Everard Irving. In their first interview, as in that with Evelyn, after the crimson flush with which she received his brotherly caress had passed away, there was a marked difference between the agitated joy of her visiter and Mary's languid passive-

ness. They had met several times, when one morning Everard finding her alone, said, after his usual affectionate greeting, "You are looking better this morning, dear Mary; are you well enough to listen to a story that I have been longing to tell you these three weeks past? Do not look so terrified; it is a very short story, and I do not think it will tire you. May I tell it?"

If Mary had been terrified, as Everard said, at his first proposition, she had quickly overcome her terror, for in firmer and even gayer tones than he had heard from her since her illness, she answered him, "Oh certainly you *may* tell it, but you need not, for I have learned it already—the birds of the air have sung it to me. You love Evelyn, Evelyn loves you, Mr. Beresford has consented to your marriage, and—and—you have only to tell me the time."

"Nay, nay," said the laughing Everard, too much absorbed in his own joyous emotions to notice the abruptness of his companion's conclusion, or the fixed gaze with which she awaited his reply, "you really make a short story of it—far shorter, I fear, than Mr. Beresford will do."

"Does Mr. Beresford object to you as the suitor of his daughter?"

"No, not as her suitor—nor to me especially as her husband—but he objects to her marriage at all at present—indeed, it seems to me that he would gladly, if possible, prevent her ever marrying."

Mary remained silent, and Everard, after a short pause, proceeded, "When first I spoke to Mr. Beresford on the subject of my attachment to Evelyn, and my hope that her heart was not insensible to that attachment, he evinced an agitation which seemed strange indeed in one ordinarily so tranquil and cheerful. While I was speaking he started from his chair, and traversed the room with folded arms and hurried steps; then, pausing before me, said, 'You know

not, sir, how much you distress me.' I felt hurt, and would have remonstrated, but he impatiently interrupted me. 'I have nothing against you; on the contrary, there is every thing in your circumstances and character to make your alliance desirable—but my Evelyn, my gentle child—' His countenance became more agitated, and I hastened to say, 'She need not be separated from you, sir; I will make my home wherever you desire.' 'And do you suppose it is of myself I am thinking?' he asked almost indignantly. 'To secure her happiness I would be willing never to see her again; but to see that bright, sunny face overshadowed by sorrow—this would be too much—too much.' 'But why should it be so, sir?' I insisted. 'I love your daughter tenderly.' 'Not better than I loved her mother,' he exclaimed with passionate earnestness, 'yet she never smiled after marriage as she had done before, and thus it will be with her child, for Evelyn's nature is sensitive as her mother's was.' I was touched, and said with feeling, 'And I will guard her sensitiveness from every rude approach—the very winds of Heaven shall not visit her cheek too roughly.' 'I doubt not your good intentions,' he replied, 'but no man can adapt himself to such a nature as hers—if it were possible, her mother had never known a sorrow.' 'But do you mean, sir, that your daughter shall never marry?' 'I almost hoped she never would,' he answered; 'in this secluded home there seemed little danger—at least, I hoped the evil day was afar off; but now—well, all I can do is to delay it yet a little. Evelyn is too young, sir, under any circumstances, to think seriously of marriage for at least a year to come. She will have yet one year of unclouded brightness,' he added in a sort of interjectional tone. In vain have been all my efforts to change this decision. Mr. Beresford's agitation has passed away, leaving only a softened tone and manner towards Evelyn. He receives me as

kindly as ever, but he insists rigidly that one year from the date of our conversation shall pass away, before I even attempt to fetter his daughter by an engagement. He trusts so entirely to my honor, never placing the least restraint on our intercourse, that I cannot disoblige him by endeavoring to win a secret promise from her. By-the-by," added Everard, laughing, "I do not know that I deserve much credit for my self-command, as Evelyn candidly acknowledged to me, that if she should make me such a promise, she knew it would be impossible for her to sleep till she had confessed it to her father. How I loved her for her frank simplicity!"

Everard had finished his narration, but Mary made no comment.

"Not a word, Mary," he exclaimed, "in return for all this long story."

"What shall I say?" she asked, with a faint smile, "that I rejoice in your happiness, you cannot doubt."

"Happiness it will indeed be if Evelyn be mine—with such a wife and such a sister," and turning affectionately to Mary, Everard passed his arm around her and attempted to draw her to him, but repulsing his arm with a slight shudder, she sank back on her pillows, saying, "Leave me now, I am weary—faint."

He would have offered her some restorative, but she waved him off impatiently, saying she needed nothing but rest and quiet.

From the moment that Mr. Beresford had been made acquainted with the unpleasant fact, that his daughter no longer regarded herself or was regarded by others as a child, his thoughts had been much and painfully occupied with her future. He had secured for her another year of freedom, but he was obliged to acknowledge to himself, that if that year were spent in the seclusion of her past life, she would be little better prepared at its conclusion to de-

cide for herself than she now was. In her retired life, with whom was she to compare Everard Irving? how to test her own feelings towards him? Mr. Beresford approved him, valued him, and if Evelyn must marry so early, there was none with whom he would so willingly intrust her happiness; but it would be unjust to him, and a dangerous experiment on Evelyn's peace, to suffer her to marry him without some acquaintance with society. Might not the feelings which had excited Everard's hopes and fears, be but the natural gratification of a young and susceptible heart at the accents of praise and tenderness—if these were heard from other voices, might not his lose its power? With many from whom to choose, might not choice become difficult, and the change which he so much dreaded for her be longer delayed? Such were Mr. Beresford's reasons for resolving that Evelyn's next winter should be passed in the city, even though, to accomplish his purpose, he should be compelled to abandon the retreat so dear to him and become again a man of the world. Already he began to renew acquaintanceships that had lain dormant for years, not without a hope that he might find some lady to whose protection he might wholly intrust his daughter, during her sojourn in the city, and thus obviate the necessity for his own removal. But a lady who should satisfy his demands was not easily found. Some were too grave and secluded to give full play to his scheme—others too frivolous to be trusted with such a treasure as his Evelyn. Some had disagreeable husbands—others too agreeable sons or brothers. He had almost despaired, when an accidental encounter with Mrs. Mabury at a dinner-party invigorated his hopes.

With great beauty, captivating manners, a ready wit, a highly-cultivated mind, and, best gift of all, that nice tact which, by enabling her to adapt herself to the com-

panion of the hour, gave value to all her other gifts. Mrs. Mabury could "win golden opinions from all sorts of people;" and she was remembered by Mr. Beresford as one of the few women of fashion he had known, who yet retained a relish for higher pursuits. If he had liked her society formerly, his pleasure in it was greatly increased now that the names of the poet, the philosopher, or the scholar of distant lands, whose works were the chosen companions of his solitude, had become to her familiar words,—that she could describe their persons, their daily habits, repeat their observations, and by her vivid sketches bring them almost in bodily shape before him. The *on dits* which had thrown a shadow over her image in the mind of Everard Irving, were little likely to be repeated to him, and if they had been, would scarcely have found a listener, far less a believer, in the charitable and unworldly Mr. Beresford.

Mr. Beresford was no manœuverer, and he communicated to Mrs. Mabury, with little circumlocution, in their first interview, his wish that Evelyn should enter society under her auspices.

"Have you established yourself for the winter?" he inquired of her.

"Yes, I was fortunate enough to find a ready-furnished house to be let for the winter, just where I desire to be, No. — Broadway. I have moved into it already, and retaining every thing just as it was—the same servants and even the pet cat—I was at home at once."

"You have done very wisely—nothing disturbs me so much as the idea of removing to a house where nothing has yet found its place, and everybody is running about looking for every thing. Could I walk at once, as you have done, into a well-arranged home, I should be tempted to come to the city this winter for the sake of my little girl."

"To place her at school?" asked Mrs. Mabury.

"No—no—she is rather over age for that," said Mr. Beresford gayly; "at seventeen, I suppose, I must admit that she is no longer a child, and begin at least to think of showing her something more of the world than she is likely to see at my country-place."

"Let her come and make me a visit," said Mrs. Mabury.

"Come first, and make one to us. My house is but a pleasant drive from the city; and if, when you have seen my Evelyn, you repeat your invitation, you will gratify my first wish, for to confess the truth, I have been endeavoring for the last five minutes to frame a request that, should she come into the city this winter, you would take her under your ægis."

"It will give me pleasure to do so." And in this Mrs. Mabury spoke truly; for too confident in her own attractions to apprehend rivalry, she delighted in adding to the charm of her home, by surrounding herself with the young and gay.

The visit, thus promised, had been made. Mrs. Mabury had been delighted with Evelyn's beauty, grace, and *naïveté*, and Evelyn had been charmed with her elegance, and her gay, good-humored frankness. Mrs. Mabury's invitation had been readily repeated, and as readily accepted, for that visit which inspired Evelyn with such joyous anticipations at the moment of her introduction to the reader.

Mrs. Mabury, on learning the existence of a Miss Raymond—a ward of Mr. Beresford—would have extended her invitation to her, but was told that, in consequence of her father's recent death and her own feeble health, she declined all society at present, except that of intimate friends.

CHAPTER III.

"Socrate s'y trouverait pris
Malgré sa philosophie."

RACINE.

"——— We receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live;
Ours is her wedding-garment—ours her shroud."

COLERIDGE.

MORE inveterate ill-humor than that of Everard Irving could scarce have resisted the enlivening influence of a rapid ride through the bracing air of that bright October day, with gay companions in whose light laugh mingled the silvery tones of the voice best loved. Before he had entered the streets of New York, his anticipations of evil had faded into indistinctness before the brightness of his present enjoyment. Still and stately, Euston Hastings unbent from his reserve only to Mrs. Mabury; and as Everard glanced from his shadowy brow to the sunny face of Evelyn, he assured himself that there was little cause to apprehend his influence over her mind, less to fear that he could ever interest her heart.

Conscious that he had hitherto evinced no desire for the acquaintance of Mrs. Mabury, it was with some hesitation that Everard, having assisted Evelyn from her horse, approached her to make his parting salutations. As if she had divined the wish which he hesitated to express, she said, "I shall bid good-morning to you now, Mr. Irving, for I must have Miss Beresford all to myself for the next hour or two; but we dine at five o'clock, and I shall be happy to

see you then, if you have no more agreeable engagement. You will meet only the present party."

It will not be doubted that her invitation was accepted.

"Well, Evelyn, I have secured the next two hours to ourselves, by giving orders to admit no visiters; so I can show you all the ins and outs of the house—not my house, remember—we are not to be hostess and guest, entertainer and entertained; but just two people who mean to be as merry as they can, and above all things, to do just as they please. Do you agree to it?"

"To do as I please?—oh, yes," replied the amused Evelyn, "it is what I always do."

"That is right; you are sure of giving pleasure to one at least, if you please yourself. When you want company, you will generally find somebody in these rooms," glancing through the large parlors whose wide doors were now thrown open, making them appear as one; "if you would be alone, follow me, and I will show you your boudoir."

Mrs. Mabury led the way to the rear of the house, and opening a door on the opposite side of the hall, introduced Evelyn into a room leading into a conservatory by glass doors. A fire burned brightly in the grate, harmonizing with the rich colors of the carpet, and the warm crimson of the embossed velvet covering of the chairs and sofa, which were its only furniture, except a small but well-filled bookcase, a harp, and piano. But Evelyn scarcely saw any thing within the room; she had flown to the glass doors, and was gazing with delight upon roses and acacias and jessamines and orange-trees full of bloom, among which birds were flying almost as free and singing quite as merrily as in their native woods.

"Beautiful! beautiful!—I fear if the price of entrance here is wishing to be alone, I shall wish to be alone very often," said Evelyn, naïvely; the next moment her heart

smote her for seeming indifference to her hostess, and she added, as she laid her hand on hers, "but you will come sometimes and see how much I enjoy it."

"Certainly; I will come as often as you can desire, if you will give expression to your pleasure in sweet sounds," and Mrs. Mabury pointed to the harp and piano.

"You shall have my best music whenever you command it; but am I not taking from you your own pet room—your boudoir?"

"No; this was furnished as you see, with the exception of the harp and some addition to the conservatory, when I came here. My pets must be all my own, and so I have refurnished a single room in the house for my boudoir. Come and see it."

Passing again into the hall, Mrs. Mabury led Evelyn into a smaller room occupying the centre of the southern side of the house. In this room there was no fireplace; yet its warmth was evidently not all the effect of the sun, which was pouring its rapidly-declining beams through the muslin lined with rose-colored silk that draperied its only window. This window was double, and the light admitted by its unusual width, falling through its delicately-colored drapery, gave to the room an aspect of such peculiar cheerfulness, as proved that he who had first expressed bright views of life by "*couleur de rose*," had been indebted to his observation for the happy epithet. The walls were covered with a silvered paper. The same silvery tint formed the ground of the soft Turkey carpet, whose flowers, though so vivid that they almost invited the hand to pluck them, contained no one glaring color. Downy cushions lay piled upon the carpet, covered with an embroidered satin of the same chaste hue with its ground. One chair, which well deserved the name of "Sleepy Hollow," and a couch of exquisitely graceful form, offered resting-places to those who rejected the

cushions. The only other furniture in the room were two small tables; the top of one was of white marble, the other of mosaic. On the last stood a porte-feuille, a box of cameo seals, and a richly-chased silver inkstand; on the other, a porcelain vase filled with flowers, amongst which the orange was betrayed by its perfume. Two cabinet pictures, purchased by Mrs. Mabury in Italy as genuine Claude Lorraines, completed the list of objects in this exquisite room.

"Well, how do you like it?" asked Mrs. Mabury, after waiting several minutes for some expression of Evelyn's admiration.

"It is beautiful—every thing in it is beautiful, and all harmonize admirably; yet I like my room best: this seems meant for rest, that for enjoyment."

"Some ten or twelve years more of life may teach you, Evelyn, that rest is the most perfect enjoyment."

Evelyn shook her head with an incredulous smile as she said, "Not to me; I am only willing to rest that I may be more awake, more alive to enjoyment afterwards."

"Because, hitherto, all your senses have been avenues of joy."

A slight shadow had fallen on Mrs. Mabury's gay countenance, but it passed as she added, "But let me tell you, Evelyn, there is a great deal of enjoyment comprised in this little room." She drew from under one of the pillows of the couch a book, and continued, "Here the mind may be active while the body is at rest; and this cheerful light, this harmonious coloring, the perfumed air, and those sunny landscapes, lull the senses into a dreamy delight."

On leaving this room, Mrs. Mabury conducted her young visiter to her own apartment to dress for dinner, saying, as she left her there, "I will call for you on my way down stairs, Evelyn; but do not wait for me if you are dressed

before I come: you will find amusement in your music or books below, and I will join you there."

To Evelyn, simple and natural in all things, the labors of the toilette were light. When they were completed, she looked about for something with which to while away the time till Mrs. Mabury should call for her, but looked in vain. After waiting probably little more than five minutes, which seemed to her fifteen at least, the music and books, the flowers and birds attracted her irresistibly, and with a little timid hesitation she found her way to them. Taking a volume from the bookcase, she seated herself with it; but well as she loved reading, Evelyn loved birds and flowers better, and after beginning one sentence three or four times, and turning away from it as often to look at her favorites, she threw the book aside, and satisfying herself by a glance at the alabaster clock that she would probably be alone for another half-hour at least, she passed into the conservatory.

"I can see if any one enters the room," thought Evelyn, "and return directly,"—but she soon ceased to look for or think of any one, as she bent admiringly and lovingly over the snowdrops and anemones, and all the minute treasures of Flora, which, hidden among the luxuriant shrubs, required to be sought for, and well repaid the search. There were some creeping plants which had been led to the roof of the building and fell thence in festoons. Among these were the graceful and fragrant clusters of a jessamine, which Evelyn repeatedly and vainly tried to reach by springing towards it. Laughing at her own failure she drew to her an empty flower-stand, and ascending it found that she could just reach the coveted branch. As she stood there, with her head thrown back, her arms elevated, and the perfect outline of her form veiled only by the curls which fell almost to her waist, the door of the parlor was opened and Euston Hastings entered, and moving gently—Euston

Hastings never moved otherwise—towards the conservatory, stood silently observing her. The unconscious Evelyn, having obtained the jessamine, still retained her place upon the stand while she wove its starry flowers and glossy leaves among her ringlets, warbling all the time in gentle tones with the hope of wooing back to their perches the fluttering birds whom her ascent had frightened away. She fancied that some of her notes were repeated by the feathered songsters, and giving fuller scope to her voice, she trilled forth the Bird Waltz with as much airy freedom as if she had been a bird herself and the music wholly spontaneous, now lingering on some sweet note, and now repeating again and again some bars which seemed to her most likely to win her chirping and fluttering auditors. In the midst of one of these refrains a slight noise attracted her attention, and turning she saw Euston Hastings. Springing to the floor she bent with a blushing cheek over the flowers, wishing that any one rather than that solemn Mr. Hastings, of whom she had always felt some awe, had seen her play the child. Euston Hastings opened the door at which he was standing, and said, "Do you sing only for birds, Miss Beresford, or may I hope to be equally favored? Come, I will draw the harp near this door, and the birds shall share my enjoyment as I have done theirs."

His tones were so gentle that Evelyn raised her eyes with more confidence than she had ever yet done to his face. It was lighted by a smile full of tender beauty, which won as irresistibly as its usual expression of power commanded, and Evelyn hesitated not a moment in complying with his desire. As she placed herself at the harp she said, "I will sing for you, Mr. Hastings, if you wish it, but I had so little success in my efforts to please the birds that I will not venture to choose for you. What shall my song be?"

"Your own favorite I doubt not will please me."

"I have many favorites."

"What, at once! That exceeds the privilege of your sex. One should be allowed to rule, for the hour at least."

Had Evelyn seen the sneer which accompanied these words she might have repented her promise to sing, but occupied with tuning her harp it passed unobserved.

"Here is my last favorite," she said; and after a plaintive prelude she sang the following simple words to an air as simple and as melancholy as themselves:—

I.

Thou speakest kindly words, beloved,
And there beameth in thine eye
The gentle light that made me glad
In days now long gone by.
Those words fall on my ear, beloved,
But my listening heart is still;
That light—I meet its gentle beams,
Yet feel no glad'ning thrill.

II.

Thy heart—it speaketh not, beloved,
When thy voice is in my ear,
And 'tis the heart's deep tone alone
That other hearts can hear.
Gentle the beams by pity shed,
But like the moon's cold light
They shine not till life's sun hath set,
And gild its cheerless night.

"Are all your favorites as melancholy as this?" asked Euston Hastings when Evelyn had concluded her song.

"Most of them are—my father says I give vent in song to all the melancholy in my nature. It is but little, I think."

"And yet," said Euston Hastings musingly, as he fixed his eyes upon her, "it is in the art we love, whether painting or sculpture or music, that the truest and deepest emotions of our nature—our true selves find expression."

There was music, melancholy music, in the deep tones of Euston Hastings's voice, and it had the power of music over Evelyn's feelings, but she strove to shake it off, saying, after a moment's pause, with a gay smile, "I assure you, Mr. Hastings, in spite of my music, I am not in the least a melancholy person. But now that you have heard my favorite may I not know yours?"

"Do you sing Italian?"

"No—I do not understand the language, and my father will not listen to songs from me which I do not understand."

"And do you learn your songs for your father's ear?" asked Euston Hastings with a smile.

Before Evelyn could answer the door opened, and Mrs. Mabury entered. If her appearance and that of Evelyn contrasted in the morning, the dress which each had now assumed rendered that contrast far more striking. Evelyn's dress was a white muslin, and her hair was unconfined save by the wreath of jessamine which she had twined around her head. A crimson turban, whose countless folds were confined just above the temple with a diamond aigrette, contrasted admirably with Mrs. Mabury's jetty curls, and gave new brilliancy to the clear and rich coloring of her complexion. A black dress, confined at the waist and wrists with diamond clasps, and a pelerine of exquisite Mechlin lace, completed a costume at once elegant and chaste. Euston Hastings fastened on her an admiring gaze, which she met with a complacent smile. As she drew near he took her hand, saying, "You are just in time, Estelle; Miss Beresford wishes to know my favorite song. As she is not acquainted with Italian music, the name would give her no information, but if you will sing it she will approve my taste, I am sure."

"To give it full effect you must sing with me," Mrs. Mabury replied, as she took her place at the harp from which Evelyn had moved.

It was not necessary to understand the words in order to feel the influence of the wild passion breathing through every note of the brilliant Italian sonata, which now seemed to gush forth from Mrs. Mabury's very soul. Powerful as was her voice and brilliant as was her execution, there mingled with hers, tones deeper, more melodious, and more expressive of passionate emotion. Evelyn's whole being thrilled beneath that music. Her cheeks flushed, her tearful eyes were cast timidly down, and as Euston Hastings turned towards her at the conclusion of the song, he exclaimed, almost involuntarily, "You must understand us, for you express in countenance and air the embodied sentiment of the song."

"I do not understand it, but I feel it," was Evelyn's reply.

Everard Irving entered soon after, and his entrance was quickly followed by the announcement of dinner. The most fastidious epicure might have been satisfied with the arrangements of Mrs. Mabury's *cuisine*, yet in this consisted the least charm of this day's dinner. It was scarce possible to recognise the reserved, silent Euston Hastings in him whose brilliant descriptions, vivid portraitures of character, and touching anecdotes, kept the minds of his hearers in the most charmed attention; while Mrs. Mabury, by her quick repartee, her happy quotation, and occasional graceful repetition of some sparkling *bon-mot*, played admirably the part of his second. Hours were passed thus agreeably before Mrs. Mabury and Evelyn withdrew, yet Euston Hastings remonstrated on their going.

"Why do you go?" he asked of Mrs. Mabury, "I thought you intended to give no countenance to that pernicious English custom of leaving men to console themselves for your absence by wine."

"You may follow us as soon as you will. I might have forgotten the rest of the world in our agreeable party, if

John had permitted me," said Mrs. Mabury, pointing to the servant who had several times announced to her the arrival of evening visiters, and who was again approaching for that purpose.

Neither Euston Hastings nor Everard Irving lingered long over their wine, yet when they entered the drawing-room they found Mrs. Mabury already surrounded by other guests. Separating herself from them she approached Everard. "This is an evening," she said, "on which I receive all my friends, I must not say *entertain* them, for in truth I leave them to entertain themselves. I hope you have no engagement which will prevent your remaining—Miss Beresford will be glad to see a familiar face among the crowd."

Everard accepted her invitation, and could Evelyn have read his thoughts of Mrs. Mabury as he pursued his solitary way homewards, she would have smiled at the contrast they presented to the decided "I do not like her," uttered but a few hours before.

"She is certainly very pleasing," Everard now said to himself, "and in judging her we must not forget that France and Italy have given their tinge to her manners. What an agreeable hostess she is! I hope she may be able to introduce a little of her graceful freedom into our society."

So irresistible is the charm of those subtle influences pervading tone, look, movement, which we denominate manner! When will the discords of earthly existence be harmonized, and beauty and grace become as they were in Paradise, the visible expression of the spirit's purity and loveliness?

As was the history of this day, so was that of many succeeding ones to Evelyn. In Mrs. Mabury's house pleasure was the aim of life, and serious thought was rarely suffered to cast more than a passing shadow over the minds of its inmates. Each night Evelyn mourned that her promise to Mary was yet unfulfilled, each morning resolved that on

that day she would see her—a resolution ever crowded over to the morrow by the numerous engagements already made for her by Mrs. Mabury. The pleasant ride or drive or visit gave place to the dinner-party, which was succeeded by the evening assemblage at home or abroad, the theatre or the concert. Almost a child in years, and quite a child in the facility with which she yielded herself to every gentle and kindly influence, and in her unreflecting confidingness of nature, is it wonderful that she glided on from day to day with unquestioning delight, like one in some ecstatic dream? She seemed to have just awakened to life—a life in which the taste and the intellect were excited to activity as well as the affections, and Mrs. Mabury was regarded as the good genius whose wand had unlocked for her this "life's enchanted halls." Everard Irving saw her every day, not with the formality to which he had supposed her position with Mrs. Mabury would condemn him, but with the friendly freedom of her home. To his bright frank spirit she turned ever for harmony with her own joyous nature, and rarely turned in vain; for even when Everard's deeper insight into character forbade a perfect agreement in opinion, he could sympathize with the loving and guileless heart from which the pleasing error sprang, and worlds would not have tempted him to hasten the moment when she should attain that fatal knowledge of evil which would make the world no longer an Eden to her. There was another who was less considerate of her present enjoyment, or more careful to guard her from dangerous illusions.

"How I admire Miss Nesmith!" said Evelyn, one day, speaking of a young lady who had just taken leave of her; "there is so much childlike unstudied grace about her."

The remark was made to Everard Irving, but it was Euston Hastings whose laugh caused a mingled feeling of morti-

fication and anger to glow in her cheek as he exclaimed, "Unstudied! her mirror would tell a different tale if it could speak."

"How did you like our preacher?" asked Mrs. Mabury of Evelyn, on their return from church.

"I was charmed with him," she replied with enthusiasm. "His countenance is so heavenly—his manner so simple yet so fervent."

"He is certainly a very agreeable man," interposed Euston Hastings, "especially at a convivial party, when he has wine enough and not too much."

Evelyn had often heard such remarks in painful silence, too timid to combat his opinions, too distrustful of herself even to feel assured that he was wrong, yet too loving and hopeful wholly to credit him. On this day, however, the preacher's earnestness had thrilled her heart, and the sneer of Euston Hastings made strange discord with its heavenly tones. Tears rushed to her eyes, and with unwonted courage, though in a faltering voice, she exclaimed, "Oh, Mr. Hastings! if every thing is so false as you appear to think, do not tell me of it. I would rather be always deceived—far rather—than live in so sad a world as this must be to one who thinks as you do."

For a moment Euston Hastings was touched by her earnest appeal, and he replied with a softened manner, "Pardon me for having given you pain. I will never again disturb your pleasing illusions—yet" he continued in a gayer tone, "permit the seer to utter one warning word before his lips are sealed. The children of earth, if they would be happy, should be contented to sport among the flowers on its surface, without attempting to penetrate beneath them. Like you, I admire the looks and manner of the preacher of to-day: they charmed my eye and ear as a fine picture or good music would have done, and with this I am satisfied. I

will not destroy the flower by seeking in its heart the source of the perfume and beauty which delight me."

Evelyn had listened with downcast eyes, and it was more than a minute after he had ceased speaking that she said, hesitatingly, "I think—I fear—that is—it seems to me that the pleasure you describe is wholly of the senses—there is no soul in it."

"Soul—what is that?" asked Euston Hastings.

Evelyn looked up in surprise, and caught what seemed a warning glance from Mrs. Mabury directed to Mr. Hastings. He apparently perceived it too, for turning away from Evelyn before she could ask an explanation of his singular question, he took a book from a table near him, and seemed too much interested in its pages to continue the conversation.

Among the fashionable novelties of that day was Castle Garden. Its greatest attraction had passed away with the heat of summer, and though Mrs. Mabury wished at least to show Evelyn that splendid view which is an enjoyment no season can take from it, the increasingly cool evenings seemed to render the propriety of doing so doubtful.

"We shall have summer days yet," said the hopeful Evelyn; and she was right. A few warm days came, and the proprietor of Castle Garden reaped a second harvest from the citizens who had been absent during the summer, and the southerners who were passing through New York on their way to their sunny homes.

"Now or never for Castle Garden, Evelyn!" exclaimed Mrs. Mabury, as she saw its name in the columns of a newspaper.

"But we are engaged this evening to Mrs. Caldwell," said Evelyn.

"We shall have had enough of the Garden by nine o'clock, and that will give us all the time we want for her *party*."

At half-past seven that evening Mrs. Mabury and Evelyn, Euston Hastings and Everard Irving drove to the Battery, and leaving their carriage at its entrance, proceeded towards the Garden. They had not walked far, when music came floating over the waters from a man-of-war lying about half a mile off. They checked their steps to listen, and Mrs. Mabury proposed advancing to the point of the Battery nearest the ship. They had not stood there long, when the sweet sounds grew softer and softer, and at length died away. Still they seemed to listen, for all remained motionless and silent under the influence of that vague sadness which the hour and its accompaniments were calculated to produce. Mrs. Mabury was the first to speak:

"How brightly the stars shine this evening!" she exclaimed.

Euston Hastings looked upward for a moment, and then, in those low, deep tones which seemed the appropriate utterance of a sad spirit, he replied, "Yes—brightly and coldly—even as they looked down upon the Chaldean shepherds thousands of years ago, and it may be upon others thousands of years before they trod this little planet, and fancied that in the stars they could read their destinies. Their destinies!" he repeated, in an accent of contempt; then added, after a moment's silence, "Yet I wonder not that the Destiny which the Greeks only have succeeded in depicting, but whose irresistible, inexorable power we all feel, should have found its type in yonder orbs, moving 'without haste, without rest,' through their fixed and changeless course. The folly was in the desire to read that which was unalterable."

"More strange than foolish, it seems to me," said Mrs. Mabury; "for I have always felt that were that page from the book of fate on which my life is written presented to me, I should turn away my eyes from it."

"And you would do wisely," replied Euston Hastings.

"Why throw over the present the shadow of the future? why anticipate the knowledge that the heart we trust is to be estranged from our own—that the hopes which give to our lives their brightness, will be quenched in night? We are born—we shall die—this is enough to know, and of the last I would gladly be ignorant, since that, like the rest, is inevitable."

Everard Irving felt a slight shudder pass over Evelyn's frame as she leaned against him, and determining for her sake not to leave what he considered such false philosophy unanswered, he spoke. At the sound of his voice Euston Hastings started,—he had forgotten the presence of any other than Mrs. Mabury.

"Neither do I desire to read my fate," said Everard; "but not because I fear to find my friends faithless or my hopes illusive, still less because I believe that the events written there would be wholly beyond my influence."

"Why then?" asked Mrs. Mabury.

"Because I do not desire to complicate the single question submitted to my decision—is this right or wrong?—the results of my actions I am willing to leave with One wiser than I."

There was no answer, and it was too dark for Everard to see the smile which curled the lip of Euston Hastings. Mrs. Mabury gave the signal, and they turned from the dark waters to the brilliantly-lighted garden; but the shade which had fallen on the spirits of the party passed not so quickly away. Everard felt that Evelyn moved not so buoyantly as she was wont to do, and as he turned to speak to her, a low, half-suppressed sigh met his ear.

"Why do you sigh, Evelyn?"

"Did I sigh?—it was unconsciously—but I cannot shake off the impression of those strangely sad words of Mr. Hastings."

"I hope such words will make no durable impression on your mind, dear Evelyn; the ruler of our lives, beloved, is not an inexorable Destiny, but a tender and compassionate Father."

"I know you are right: yet his mind is so powerful, his words often so thrillingly eloquent, and his varying tones so singularly musical—how can I resist his influence?"

"You greatly admire Mr. Hastings, Evelyn," said Everard, with a sudden pang of jealousy.

"Greatly admire Mr. Hastings," she repeated, "how can I help admiring him?"

Everard's very heart grew cold as he whispered, "Do you love him, Evelyn?"

Considering their relative positions, the question, it may be supposed, must have excited sorrow, perhaps anger. Everard probably expected himself to read some such emotion in her face, as she paused suddenly and turned towards him, but he saw there only an expression of overpowering surprise as she repeated, "Love him!—love Mr. Hastings! —I should as soon think of loving one of those bright stars on which we gazed just now; he seems as far above me, he certainly is as little known to me, as they are—how could *you* ask such a question?"

Nothing in this reply was more agreeable to Everard than the slight accent of reproach evident at its conclusion, and the emphasis on the word—you. He had scarcely time to murmur, "Bless you, my Evelyn, for those words," when they stood beneath the brilliantly-lighted gateway, and beside Mrs. Mabury who awaited them there.

"Why, Evelyn, how the evening air has made your cheeks glow, and how brilliant your eyes are," exclaimed Mrs. Mabury as she looked admiringly on her young friend.

"That last must be a reflection from the stars," said Evelyn, with a laugh not altogether free from embarrassment.

and a quick glance at Everard Irving, whose smile, at once joyous and tender, brought a yet more vivid flush into her cheeks.

"If so, I hope they have not been partial in their reflections," said Mrs. Mabury as she led the way to the garden.

At that very hour Mary Raymond sat in her lonely and darkened chamber, looking up at those bright but not, to her, cold stars. She read in them not the future but the past of life. Even thus had they shone upon her careless childhood and her happy youth; and words, tones, looks connected with those joyous seasons, came back with painful vividness before her. Again her mother's lips were pressed fondly on her brow, again she heard her father's earnest "Good-night, my child"—so earnest that it seemed a prayer rather than a common form—and felt his hand laid as if in blessing on her head. Then with that quick transition which only thought and feeling can accomplish, she was struggling with the flood of sorrow which swept away her home and its affections, leaving only Everard Irving to stand between her and desolation. For one instant her heart thrilled again beneath the soothing tenderness, the earnest devotion which he had manifested to her during that season of calamity—the next, bitter humiliation swept over her spirit, as the delusions, the unconscious delusions, to which that devotion had given birth passed before her, and she lived over again that moment of agony in which they had become manifest to her by their death-pang. As she turned from these thronging images to the lonely present, and felt, with that conviction which youth ever cherishes of the tenacity of its impressions, that such must her life be, she shrank from its dead, unvaried blank, and with a sickening shudder repeated to herself, "And is this all? '*Existence* may be borne'—but is endurance to be hence-

forth the highest aim of my being? Was I so tenderly cherished, so carefully nurtured for this?"

With a burst of passionate sorrow, Mary wrung her hands and looked up as if she would utter the complaint to Heaven which she dared not speak to earth. The same cloudless sky, with the changeless stars in their serene beauty, met her eye. Did some ray from them,

"Striking th' electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound,"

bring rushing to her memory holy lessons which in her passionate absorption had been forgotten—was she thus reminded that life was not given only for herself or for earth? Whatever was the cause, such thoughts had arisen in her mind, and her upward, impassioned glance was followed by almost instant prostration on her knees beside her couch. There long she knelt, with her head bowed low and her face hidden in her clasped hands, in perfect stillness but for the sobs that sometimes shook her frame. Who shall penetrate into the spirit's mysterious intercourse with Him, who, inhabiting eternity, yet dwelleth with the humble and contrite heart? Reverently and humbly to illustrate this precious truth, to show that in His presence earth's discords are harmonized, and peace and strength arise where all was disorder and weakness, may be permitted—but there let us pause, lest we be as the fools who "rush in where angels dare not tread."

When Mary Raymond arose from her knees, her proud and passionate thoughts were stilled; there was a subdued, chastened expression on her pale face; and though she wept long after her head was on her pillow, it was as an erring, repentant, and forgiven child weeps in tenderness rather than in sorrow on its father's bosom.

Though Evelyn, too timid to question, too gentle to resist the influences surrounding her, had wished in vain for

an opportunity to visit Mary, she had sent to her, through her father, daily messages of love, and tokens that her heart was often with her in the midst of her gayeties.

"I wish Mary had these beautiful flowers," she exclaimed, as she proceeded to Mrs. Caldwell's brilliant supper-room with a splendid bouquet that had just been presented to her.

"Give them to me when you are going and she shall have them to-morrow morning before she breakfasts," said Everard Irving; and he accomplished his promise, though he left Mrs. Caldwell's at a very late hour and Mr. Beresford breakfasted at a very early one. This was not the first visit by many which he had made to Mary since Evelyn's departure; but these visits were constrained and hurried, and marked, perhaps, more decidedly than his absence would have done, the gradual alienation of feeling which his attachment to another could scarcely fail to occasion. He came from scenes of mirth, with his heart yet bounding to the careless song and the gay laugh, and though the chastened stillness of Mary's manner checked his buoyancy, and he strove to subdue himself into something like harmony with it, it was an effort seen and felt, and therefore painful alike to both.

This morning, however, Mary, under the influence of the last evening's struggle with herself, had appeared for the first time since her illness at Mr. Beresford's breakfast-table, and was conversing cheerfully with him when she saw Everard ascend the steps of the piazza. The smile died on her lip, but before he reached the door of the parlor she had conquered the sudden pang, and she greeted him with an expression of pleasure which he had not seen on her face for long.

"Have you become a Swedenborgian, Mr. Irving?" asked Mr. Beresford, with a smile twinkling in his eyes.

"No, sir," said Everard, with some surprise.

"A *clairvoyant*, then, as the French magnetizers call their subjects?"

"No, sir," and Everard smiled in sympathy with the smile which he still did not understand.

"Then it was by some less spiritual means you discovered that Mary would breakfast with me this morning."

Everard laughed and Mary tried to laugh as he replied, "No—no—that I assure you was an unexpected enjoyment, but I was *clairvoyant* enough to know that I should give her pleasure by coming."

"No assurance in that now! In my day a gentleman would have humbly hoped that a lady would permit him the pleasure of visiting her."

"Not if the lady were one whom he had quarrelled with and kissed into good-humor again twenty times a day when they were no higher than this table; but I did not mean to be quite so presuming as you supposed, it was not I but my flowers that I was so certain would give her pleasure," and Everard uncovered the bouquet which he had enveloped carefully with paper.

Mary was not sorry, perhaps, to have something just then to occupy her attention.

"This is beautiful indeed," she exclaimed. "Roses too, while all around us looks so cold and wintry—they breathe of home and look like it too—do they not, Everard?" she asked with animation.

"A saucy insinuation that," said Mr. Beresford; "as if roses never bloomed north of Baltimore."

"Oh, I know they do, sir—in hothouses," said Mary, smilingly; "but come they from north or come they from south, they are very welcome, and I am very thankful, and Everard shall have a cup of coffee as a reward."

"You owe me no thanks, except for bringing them—Evelyn sent them to you."

"Did she?" said Mary, as she laid the flowers aside, and busied herself with Everard's coffee.

"The gipsy!" exclaimed Mr. Beresford, taking up the bouquet, "where did she get such beautiful flowers—has she been robbing Mrs. Mabury's conservatory?"

"Oh no! the bouquet was brought to Mrs. Caldwell's yesterday evening by one of her devoted admirers—a young exquisite whom Evelyn almost pets as a pretty boy, never dreaming that he is intending her the honor of becoming his wife. I should not be at all surprised if she made him a present of a handsome top or ball, in return for his flowers."

Mr. Beresford laughed at the idea; but as he rose to leave the room, he said quietly, "Just the right sort of admirer for Evelyn for some time to come."

"Thank you, Mr. Beresford," said Everard, with a smiling bow towards the door at which that gentleman had just disappeared; "but I am happy to say that I do not think Evelyn quite of your opinion."

"You were rather apprehensive at one time that her taste lay in the opposite extreme."

"That she would admire Mr. Hastings, you mean. It was a groundless apprehension, I believe. Admire him she certainly must, but their natures are too much opposed to make the admiration dangerous."

"Have you learned to admire him too?" asked Mary, not unwilling to turn the conversation from Evelyn.

"It is impossible not to do so. By-the-by, Mary, I think him just the man to captivate you; and were I quite sure of his principles, I should above all things desire to have you meet."

"Indeed! what qualities in him do you consider so much to my taste?"

"Not any particular quality, but his general style of character harmonizes, I think, in many respects with yours."

"In what respects?" persisted Mary, far from being well pleased with the assertion; for having never seen Euston Hastings, her only idea of him was derived from Everard's former description, which certainly had not been very prepossessing.

"Why, Mary, you would make a capital cross-questioner —I must not talk at random I see with you. But to answer your question, I think there is a consciousness of power, a self-dependence, a decision and intrepidity of nature about Euston Hastings, which would be necessary in any man who should hope to win your heart."

Everard paused, and Mary, who was listening intently, said, "But that was not all—you said our natures harmonized—you must have meant something more than this."

"It was a thoughtless expression which I can scarcely make good; but I believe it was caused by an impression which you both give me of reserve. I feel, in looking at Euston Hastings, that I know as little of him—though I meet him every day and see him exhibit many varying moods—as I do of the depths of ocean, from looking at its now calm and now tempestuous surface."

"You think him a dissembler," said Mary, in a low, quiet tone.

"I fear he is," Everard replied.

"And you think thus of me!"

The words were common-place, but the tone—what a world of reproachful sorrow may a tone express!

"Mary! how can you do such injustice to my love even in your thoughts! When you can forgive yourself for it, I will forgive you."

"Nay—nay—Everard, wait not for that!" she exclaimed. "Pardon me! the thought brought its own punishment."

The tears that rushed to her eyes pleaded more powerfully than her words, and Everard, as quickly excited to ten-

derness as to anger, raised the hand she had extended to his lips, and continued to clasp it as he said, smilingly, "I hope it gave you a sharp twinge, for you deserved it."

"So sharp that I must know what you did mean, lest it should come back again. You say of Mr. Hastings and me that our natures harmonize, because he is a—"

"Beware!" interposed Everard, as he fixed his eyes smilingly on Mary. "You will feel the twinge again."

"Then tell me—what did you say?"

"That you both seem to me reserved, but in a very different way. Euston Hastings envelops himself in clouds which assume a thousand varying shapes, and keep the busy crowd wondering which is the real man, who, in truth, is not seen by them at all, and you—" Everard paused, and Mary looked eagerly into his face, "and you always remind me of a veiled picture; the veil is slight, but one who has looked as closely as I have on your heart, knows that thoughts, emotions, richer, deeper, more influential on your life than all that are seen, lie hidden beneath it. One day, when I have won your confidence more fully than now, you will raise that veil for your brother—will you not, Mary?"

The hand which Everard clasped trembled in his, and Mary's dark lashes rested on a cheek in which the color came and went almost with every breath. It was seldom her feelings were so fully mirrored in her face, and as Everard gazed on her, he more than once repeated to himself, "How exquisitely lovely she is!"

The entrance of a servant to remove the breakfast-tray broke the silence which was becoming awkward, and Everard soon after took his leave.

Mary sat long where Everard had left her. Her eyes were downcast, a smile was on her lip, the color of the rose upon her cheek. She looked like one in a happy dream, and still she felt that clasping hand, still heard those gentle

tones and those words of soothing, flattering tenderness. The mantel clock chimes the half-hour—its striking ten sent Everard away—can it be that half an hour has passed since then? A brighter color rises to her cheek; but why should it, since she whispers to herself, "How sweet it is to think of such a *brother!*"

The dream has been broken, and she rises to leave the room, still carrying with her its happy impression; but in passing the table her eye rests on Evelyn's neglected flowers: the smile leaves her lip, the light fades from her eye, and taking the flowers from the table, she proceeds with slow and languid steps to her own apartment. Her door is closed, and all around is silent. Is she again seeking direction and strength from the Source of all wisdom and power? If so, those would think she had not sought in vain who had seen the resolved and even lofty expression of her countenance, as, about an hour after, she left her own room and went towards that called Mr. Beresford's study, in which he usually spent his morning hours.

"This is kind, my dear," said Mr. Beresford, as, opening his door at her gentle summons, he perceived who was his visiter. "I shall not miss Evelyn so much now that you can leave your room and be with me. With two daughters, I can afford to let one of them visit occasionally."

This kindness from one whom her father had loved, and to whom he had confided her, was deeply gratifying to Mary, yet it made more embarrassing the request she had come to prefer, which was no less than that Mr. Beresford would permit her to spend the winter in Baltimore, with a lady who had been a kind and dear friend to her mother.

"Spend the winter!—the whole winter, my dear!" Mr. Beresford repeated with surprise.

"Dr. Huntly advises a change for me, sir, and I think he will scarcely advocate my returning to a northern climate

after the winter, which is so rapidly approaching, has set in."

"Perhaps not,—but I hate to lose you for so long a time."

"Thank you, sir—you are very kind, and I shall return to you in the spring, I hope, better able to show my appreciation of your kindness—that is, if you permit me to go," she added, with a faint smile.

"Oh, certainly—I have neither the right nor the wish to prevent it, and I will accompany you myself, whenever you desire."

"Nay, sir, I hoped not to give you that trouble."

"Do not call it trouble—I shall like the excursion. But when did you think of going?"

"The day after to-morrow, sir, if it will suit you."

"So early—are you expected?"

"Not yet—but I can write by to-morrow's mail. I am assured I shall be welcome."

"Very well, my dear, very well—arrange it all as you like. What does Mr. Irving say to your going?"

"He does not know it, sir," said Mary, coloring and looking down, "and I was about to ask that you would say nothing about it, either to him or to Evelyn; they would doubtless endeavor to dissuade me, and while I could not relinquish my wish, I am too feeble to combat their arguments."

"Just as you please, my dear, about that, but—" and Mr. Beresford hesitated with the consciousness that he was approaching a painful subject, "are you quite right to go there—to Baltimore? will it not try your strength too far?"

"Oh, no, no!" exclaimed Mary, bursting into tears; "there I shall gather strength for all other trials."

Mr. Beresford's eyes glistened as he drew her to him, and gently and tenderly soothed her sorrow.

Two days after, notes from Mary and Mr. Beresford announced to Evelyn and Everard their departure for Baltimore. It cost Evelyn some tears, for she loved Mary tenderly; and now that she was beyond her reach, her heart suggested a thousand ways—most of them, in truth, impracticable—in which she might have evinced that love; but her tears were soon dried in the atmosphere surrounding her. If Everard thought longer of Mary, it was without pain. He knew the friend to whom she had gone to be both tender and judicious, and thought that Mary could not have chosen a better companion for her season of sorrow.

Mary's agitation as she approached the scenes with which she had been familiar in happier years, confirmed Mr. Beresford's apprehension of the impropriety of her return to them; and when he saw her, on their arrival at the house of her friend Mrs. Maclaurin, throw herself into the arms of that lady in a passion of tears, he said, in a sort of apologetic tone, "I fear I have done wrong in yielding to Mary's wishes; but she has suffered so much, that I could not refuse what she seemed to desire so earnestly."

"Do not be uneasy, sir," said Mrs. Maclaurin, smiling through her tears; "Mary's tears are not all sorrowful, and rest will do much to restore her composure. I am rejoiced that you consented to her coming."

Notwithstanding these assurances, and though Mary, when he called on her the next morning, received him with more cheerfulness than he had yet seen in her, Mr. Beresford could not wholly overcome his apprehensions; and even at the last hour of his stay in Baltimore, he urged her to return with him, and exacted from her a promise that she would write to him, if at any time during the winter she desired to "come home," as he kindly denominated her return to his house. These impressions had been

perhaps strengthened, by finding that the friend to whom Mary had volunteered so long a visit was an elderly widow, without children, who seemed to enter little into society, and whose manners, though serenely cheerful, never approached to gayety.

"The poor child," he said to himself, "should have something to amuse her, and divert her mind. If she would go back with me, I would remove into the city and bring cheerful society around her at home, since her mourning prevents her seeking entertainment abroad. I will speak of it to her to-morrow."

Mr. Beresford did speak of it, and Mary thanked him with warm and true feeling for his kindness, but assured him she would be happier for the present where she was.

"I know," she added with a smile, "that you are surprised I should have come to recover my cheerfulness to this retired house, and to so serious a person as Mrs. Maclaurin,—but you do not know her. She has had great trials, and they may have subdued her vivacity; but I have heard my mother say that she possessed a rare elevation of character, and the most uniform cheerfulness she had ever seen in any one."

"I have no doubt she is an excellent woman, my dear, and I am very sure that to me she would be a more interesting and pleasing companion than younger and gayer people; but you are young, and I hope will soon be gay again."

Mary thought "It is sorrow and loneliness of spirit, not years, that make us old;" but she answered Mr. Beresford with a smile, "I hope to come back to you, sir, as cheerful as Mrs. Maclaurin,—and that will be better, I think, than coming back gay."

"That is a strange reflection," thought Mr. Beresford, "for one so young."

Acquainted with Mr. Beresford's studious habits and

disinclination to business, Mr. Raymond, in confiding his daughter to his sole care, had associated another gentleman with him in the management of her property. This gentleman resided in Baltimore, where the Raymond estate principally lay; and he now gladly availed himself of Mr. Beresford's visit, to communicate with him relative to some financial arrangements which could not be completed without his sanction. Mr. Beresford's absence from New York was thus prolonged to more than a fortnight. It seemed to him an age since he had held Evelyn to his heart, and he hastened to Mrs. Mabury's immediately on his arrival. It was almost midday, yet the servant seemed strangely indisposed to admit him; and when he, almost angrily, insisted on seeing his daughter, he led him to the door of the parlor in which she was, and left him to announce himself. Supposing Evelyn alone, Mr. Beresford entered without hesitation, but had scarcely advanced a step within the room when he stood confounded at the singular scene that presented itself. Fifteen or twenty persons were collected in the room, each of whom seemed desirous to outvie the others in the singularity of his costume. Kings and peasants, knights and priests, muses, graces, and lady abbesses, were mingled together in the most motley confusion. Mr. Beresford's attention was, however, almost immediately riveted to a slightly-elevated platform at the farther extremity of the apartment, on which stood Mrs. Mabury and Evelyn, in dresses which, though belonging to another age and country, were as well adapted to display the peculiar charms of each as if they had been designed for that especial purpose. Both wore long white veils; but Evelyn's was drawn back from her face, and held gracefully aside with one upraised hand, while a crimson blush had risen to her very temples, and her eyes were lowered beneath Mrs. Mabury's earnest gaze. Mrs. Mabury's coun-

tenance, shaded, not concealed by her veil, expressed admiration mingled with hopeless sadness.

The bewildered Mr. Beresford turned his eyes from this exquisite picture, whose beauty his astonishment scarce permitted him to observe, to the other side of the room, hoping to find there some key to the enigma. The familiar faces which met his view in most of those he looked on, made the motley garbs in which they were arrayed seem but the more ridiculous. None seemed to observe his presence—all eyes, all thoughts were apparently directed to Mrs. Mabury and Evelyn, and again Mr. Beresford looked towards them. They still preserved unmoved the graceful position in which he had first seen them, but a smile was playing around Evelyn's lips. The next moment, dropping her veil, she exclaimed in an apologetic tone, "Oh, Madame L'Egaré, my arm—" is so weary, she would have added, but her eyes rested on her father, and with a joyful cry she bounded into his arms, heedless of the many voices that bade her take care of her veil, and quite unmindful of the stately movement which Cedric the Saxon would have judged becoming in the representative of Lady Rowena—the lineal descendant of Alfred the Great.

In the succeeding chapter we will give the reader a somewhat more detailed explanation of the scene just described, than Mr. Beresford obtained.

CHAPTER IV.

A flower, its leaves and odors cast
On a swift rolling wave;
Th' unheeding torrent darkly passed,
And back no treasure gave.

HEMANS.

"How do you live here? Have you some amusements —theatre—opera—ballet?" asked Madame L'Egaré of her friend Mrs. Mabury.

These ladies had been intimately acquainted in Paris, and when the failure of a political intrigue, in which he had been engaged, drove Monsieur L'Egaré to America, the horror with which Madame anticipated her residence there, was somewhat lessened by the knowledge that she should meet at least one civilized being. To Mrs. Mabury her arrival had given real pleasure.

"Now," she exclaimed to Euston Hastings, on reading the note which announced it, "now, I may hope to give a new tone to this monotonous society. With Madame L'Egaré's assistance I have some chance of being able to introduce some graceful variety into those stiff assemblages of people which have almost driven me to despair."

"Theatres we have," Mrs. Mabury replied to her friend's question, "but no opera—no ballet. Do not despair," she continued, as she saw the pretty Frenchwoman shrug her shoulders and turn up her eyes with an expression of the deepest mortification,—"do not despair, we may have all we want, even the ballet, I doubt not, in time; but the people here do not know how to amuse themselves. They

have no taste, no fancy, and I must have your aid in introducing a little variety amongst them. I could do little by myself;—one, you know, cannot long keep a ball in the air."

"And what shall I do?"

"Just make all the amusement you can out of the material around you."

"But have you people, not *canaille*—I know you have not nobility,—but gentlemen—ladies—young, gay people?"

"Oh, yes—in abundance."

"Then for what they have not amusements? Bring them together—let them sing, dance, act charades, make *tableaux vivans*."

"Capital!" exclaimed Mrs. Mabury; "get in my carriage and drive home with me. You shall see my rooms, and we will arrange some tableaux at once. They know nothing of them here, and I do not doubt they will take prodigiously."

Madame L'Egaré complied, and in a few days the affair was arranged. The various characters had been fitted with appropriate costumes, and had more than once assumed their positions before a select few, in preparation for the grand exhibition for which cards had been issued.

Evelyn appeared in more than one of these tableaux. She was the Miranda to Everard Irving's Ferdinand, the Juliet to his Romeo, and she unconsciously gave no slight gratification to Everard and amusement to others by her unwillingness to accept any character in which another than he would appear as her lover. One tableau represented the unequalled scene between Rebecca, personated by Mrs. Mabury, and Brian de Bois-Guilbert, who found in Euston Hastings a representative pronounced faultless by all, notwithstanding his want of height. Mrs. Mabury's Rebecca was so exquisitely beautiful, as well as so correct in coun-

tenance and costume, that there was a general demand for some other scene from the same work in which she might again be introduced. The visit to Rowena and the moment in which her fortunate rival lays aside, at her request, the bridal veil, was suggested, and "Miss Beresford should be the fair-haired Rowena," exclaimed many voices at once.

Mrs. Mabury was charmed with the suggestion, and the next day this scene was exhibited.

"What a splendid contrast!" and "Which is the most beautiful?" were audible murmurs.

"Beautiful!" exclaimed Madame L'Egaré. "Beautiful! But we have our Rebecca twice—is there not some other scene for our Rowena? Ha! is there not one other for her?" she repeated to Everard Irving who stood near her.

"Oh, yes! there is the tournament in which she is chosen queen of the day, and when she is about to crown the victor, discovers in the almost mortally-wounded knight who kneels before her, her early and long-absent lover, Ivanhoe."

"Excellent! excellent! we will have that scene. Stay—stay Rowena!" she continued, motioning to Evelyn to remain where she was.

"And now who shall be Ivanhoe?"

Madame L'Egaré looked up in the face of Everard as she asked the question, but quickly shaking her head, added, "You will not do, for he had been wandering many years, I remember, in far countries, and you are too fair and too young for such a pilgrimage."

"But Ivanhoe was a Saxon," pleaded Everard.

"Ah! but the sun and the sea had made him brown, and he was sorrowful and had much care. Oh, no! you will not do." She glanced hastily around. "Ah, Mr. Hastings! he is the very man. Come, Mr. Hastings, you know all about it, I dare say,—you shall be Ivanhoe."

Nothing loth, Euston Hastings advanced, saying, with a

smile, "I am at your service—Brian de Bois-Guilbert, Ivanhoe, any thing you please—but would you not like some scene in which they both appear? Picture-galleries always have their *cicerone*, and ours might do for me as the Dutchman did for his pictures, and tell the spectators—this is the famous Brian de Bois-Guilbert, and now—this is Ivanhoe."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the laughing Madame L'Egaré, "we will have no such scene, you must be content with one character at one time; but we will have this scene with Rowena."

"But you will want armor," suggested some one.

"Armor!" exclaimed the ready Frenchwoman, "oh! that is nothing at all. I will contrive for that. I will paint some paper armor, and the helmet—oh! it is the easiest thing in all the world; but now you must kneel—did you not say Ivanhoe was kneeling, Mr. Irving?—and Miss Beresford you must stand there, just where you are, with a wreath, a laurel-wreath I suppose, in your hand, just going to put it on his head—and Mr. Hastings you must look very tender and passionate."

"Impassioned," interposed some one.

"Ah, yes!—*passionné*—just like a lover."

Evelyn was shrinking away, but Madame L'Egaré caught her hand and drawing her to the right position, said, "That is your place, Miss Beresford—do not be frightened—Mr. Hastings is not your lover in earnest no more than Mr. Irving was just now."

Evelyn colored a deeper crimson at this, yet she stood where she had been placed, with her eyes fastened upon the ground.

"There, Mr. Hastings, that is quite right," exclaimed Madame L'Egaré, as walking to a distance she took a view of the parties; "but, Miss Beresford, you must look at him, or how will you know he is your lover?"

"Look on me and know me for your lover," was whispered in tones so soft that none but Evelyn heard them.

Ashamed of her increasing and as it seemed, even to herself, unreasonable agitation, with a determined effort she raised her drooping lids and cast her eyes on the kneeling form and uplifted face of Euston Hastings. Not Ivanhoe himself could have fastened on his long-unseen Rowena a glance of more thrilling tenderness than that she met. Her eyes sank lower than ever, and, unheeding the remonstrances of Madame L'Egaré, she retreated abashed and trembling to the side of Mrs. Mabury.

"Get me off," she whispered to that lady, as many voices joined in urging her to resume her place. "Get me off; I cannot stand there and have Mr. Hastings kneel to me—indeed, I cannot."

"But why not?" asked Mrs. Mabury, with a scrutinizing look, "you did not hesitate to have Mr. Irving kneel to you."

"Oh! I know him so well, and—and—but to have Mr. Hastings kneel and look at me so; indeed, I cannot do it."

"Well, do not look so much alarmed—go to your room, if you like, and I will make your excuse."

Evelyn gladly and quickly withdrew, and calling Madame L'Egaré and Euston Hastings to her, Mrs. Mabury said to them in a low voice and with a playful manner, "You must give up this scene, Miss Beresford seems determined that no one but Mr. Irving shall make love to her even in sport. As for you," addressing herself to Mr. Hastings, "you are positively awful in her eyes, and as no one else can so well enact Ivanhoe, we must give this up."

"I am equally well satisfied either way," said Euston Hastings, "and only regret having frightened the young lady. Pray assure her I have no intention of interfering with Mr. Irving's monopoly."

"Very provoking," exclaimed Madame L'Egaré, "she must be one very *sensitive demoiselle* if she cannot look for one moment at any other gentleman than Mr. Irving. Mr. Irving," she continued in a louder tone to Everard, who was observing the trio with almost unconscious earnestness, "you are the very fortunate man, Miss Beresford—" but here Mrs. Mabury checked the thoughtless communication, and Everard was left to conjecture in what his good fortune consisted. His sparkling eyes and smiling lip, as well as the sudden color that flushed to his brow, showed his own confidence in the correctness of his conclusions. A smile curled the lip of Euston Hastings too, as his eyes rested for a moment on the face of Everard, but it was a smile whose meaning was less easily read.

Madame L'Egaré would have been strengthened in her conviction of Evelyn's excessive sensitiveness, could she have followed her to her own apartment, and seen her as, casting herself into a chair, she covered her burning face with her clasped hands. The outer world was wholly shut out from her perception, yet the flush came and went upon her cheek, and her frame thrilled as if she was still meeting that look so tender and impassioned, that look which seemed at once to reveal the soul of the gazer and to read her own.

The noise of the company departing recalled her to other thoughts. Mrs. Mabury would probably seek her when they were gone, and with a scarce-defined fear of her observation, Evelyn rose and began to lay aside the dress of Rowena and resume her own; yet again and again her thoughts reverted to the cause of her recent emotion, and she asked herself why a look should have had such power over her. Everard Irving's gaze had never thus abashed her, and if she had sometimes turned blushing away from it, it was because she associated with it the words of love which she had heard from him. But why should she thus

tremble and shrink at a look of Mr. Hastings—a look, too, assumed but in sport. A proud flush again crimsoned her cheek, and gave a new character to her face, as she said to herself, "I hate these tableaux, and wish I had never consented to place myself where I must permit myself to be so gazed at, or endure the raillery of that Madame L'Egaré. I dread to meet her."

This was a needless dread, as Evelyn found, a few minutes later, when she obeyed the summons to dinner. Monsieur and Madame L'Egaré and Mr. Hastings were with Mrs. Mabury, but Madame L'Egaré had too much tact and good breeding, after the first provocation of her disappointment had passed, to make an allusion that she knew must be embarrassing to her young companion.

Evelyn was vexed to feel the color mounting again into her cheek on meeting Euston Hastings, a vexation that was not lessened by the cold and haughty reserve expressed in his countenance when some slight courtesy offered to her at table compelled her to raise her eyes to his face. Her imagination, she felt, must at least greatly have exaggerated the feeling with which it had, for a moment, appeared to glow.

The gay groups which began to assemble at Mrs. Mabury's about nine o'clock of the evening for which her cards had been issued, entertained a vague expectation of some novel diversion, but what the novelty would be had been a secret carefully guarded from all but the initiated few. Expectation was yet farther excited by the closed doors of an apartment usually thrown open to Mrs. Mabury's guests; but there was no farther sign of that which awaited them, and baffled curiosity was at its utmost elevation, when the room in which they stood was suddenly darkened, and, at the same instant of time, the folding-doors being thrown open, revealed at the opposite extremity of the other a bril-

liantly-lighted tableau of Amy Robsart in her brief hour of joy, as seated at the feet of the base-minded but noble-seeming Leicester, she gazed fondly and admiringly on his graceful person, habited in all the brilliancy of his court array. Another and another picture rapidly succeeded. Loud plaudits followed the appearance of Miranda and Ferdinand, of Romeo and Juliet, of the haughty and passionate Brian de Bois-Guilbert and the noble Rebecca. Last of all came the scene we have already described between the Jewess and the gentle Rowena. Before this scene was represented, Euston Hastings, having doffed the Outlaw's costume, had taken his place among the lookers-on.

"Beautiful! beautiful!" was exclaimed on every side.

"Both beautiful," said an intimate acquaintance to Euston Hastings; "but the Jewess for me—Rowena is too passionless."

"Passionless!" ejaculated Euston Hastings, with startling emphasis, "you have never looked into her eyes."

Everard Irving was just behind the speaker, and a slight frown shadowed his open brow as those emphatic tones met his ear; but no fear of Euston Hastings or doubt of Evelyn mingled with his displeasure at hearing his future bride alluded to with such freedom.

Buoyant in spirit, confiding in heart, Everard would have seen Evelyn leave her retired home for gayer and more frequented scenes without an apprehension, had not Mr. Beresford taught him to fear, by his frequent insinuations, that Evelyn had assented to his wishes without any real understanding of him or of herself, and that her assent, consequently, wanted all that could give it value or stability. The doubt—the distrust thus communicated, was an unwonted and unwelcome guest in his heart, and now that, after three weeks' trial of the world and exposure to general adulation, Evelyn still turned to him as her chosen companion, and

smiled on him as confidingly as ever, it was indignantly banished thence. His spirit joyfully returned to its accustomed repose, and he expiated his unwilling fault by yet deeper tenderness and a more unquestioning faith towards her he loved.

The week following the display of *tableaux vivans* at Mrs. Mabury's was unusually quiet. All seemed to experience something of the languor which follows great excitement. For the first time in Evelyn's life she felt that causeless sadness—that weariness of spirit and vague dissatisfaction which are the almost invariable followers of an artificial exhilaration. Change is always desirable to one so affected, and Evelyn would have returned home, but Mrs. Mabury would not listen to such a proposal, and even her father perversely, as she thought, opposed it, supposing it a sacrifice of her own inclination to what she believed his desire. She often excused herself from accompanying Mrs. Mabury and Madame L'Egaré in their morning excursions, pleading some indispensable engagement at home—a letter that must be written, or a book that must be read. Thus one morning, while they were making a tour of the shops, she stood in the conservatory, watching, with admiring eyes, an oxalis as it unrolled its crimson-tipped petals at the sun's first glance. Her face was turned from the parlor; her attention was absorbed by the flower, and she neither saw nor heard the entrance of any one till the voice of Euston Hastings, sounding almost close beside her, caused her to start with surprise.

"Pardon me—I have alarmed you," he said, in his gentlest tones.

"Indeed, Mr. Hastings, you have alarmed me!" she exclaimed, endeavoring to laugh off some feeling of embarrassment at such an unexpected tête-à-tête, "and unless you can show me your invisible ring, or Fortunatus's cap, I shall not easily believe that one who moves without sound is a 'mortal being of earth's mould.'"

He made no reply to her rallying—he seemed not even to hear it, but continued silently to gaze on her with an expression at once tender and sad. Her eyes fell beneath his, and turning away, she moved almost unconsciously a few steps from him.

"Nay, Evelyn,"—it was the first time he had named her thus—"leave me not—fear not to look on me—I do not ask now to be known as your lover, but only as your friend."

This allusion to a scene which had caused her so much disquiet, awakened a fear that rarely slept with Evelyn in the presence of Euston Hastings—a fear of covert ridicule. Vexation restored the self-possession which had been overcome by emotions widely different, and she answered quickly, "Mr. Hastings does not, I hope, suppose me so senseless as to fear the renewal in a *tête-à-tête* of a sport intended for the amusement of others."

"Sport!" he repeated with emphasis, "but so be it; there is at least no sport in my asking that you will repose in me, and suffer me to exercise towards you the confidence of a friend!"

A friend!—could it be possible?—might Evelyn believe her senses? Euston Hastings, the observed of all observers—Euston Hastings, the haughty, the reserved—to whose intellect all seemed to yield willing homage—whom none approached with familiarity—suing for the friendship of a girl, almost a child! It was inconceivable, and the bewildered Evelyn could scarcely reply to it at all. When she did, her "You do me honor, sir," spoken without even a glance at him she addressed, sounded inexcusably cold, even to herself.

No anger colored the pale brow of Euston Hastings, but drawing himself slightly up, he spoke proudly and sadly, "Pardon me, Miss Beresford—you have punished my presumption, and I now only ask that you would forget it."

Evelyn felt that she had wounded him, and in an instant her hand was in his, and looking upon him with pleading eyes, she exclaimed, "Pardon me, Mr. Hastings! I was so much surprised—so—I—" She could not proceed.

"And why surprised, Evelyn?—permit me to call you by that name. Why should you be surprised? Did you think me too cold, too insensible for friendship?"

"Oh no, Mr. Hastings; but I—I have no claim—no right—I could not have hoped—" Again Evelyn paused, confused and embarrassed.

"You thought there could be little sympathy between us, but, believe me, Evelyn, there is more than you imagine. Your heart springs not in more glad accordance with the bright and the beautiful things of earth than mine, though longer experience of their frailty has mingled sadness with my enjoyment; and you too, Evelyn, you have deep chords in your heart whose tones are sad, or why is the music you best love so melancholy? Not thus is it with those who surround us. Light, gay spirits, they float upon the stream of time, uncursed with our sad gift of seeing the dark and rushing waters beneath the many-colored bubbles on their surface. Can you wonder that they seldom awaken my interest—that they sometimes excite my mockery? But you, Evelyn, why do you shrink from me? Mockery dies in the presence of pure and bright spirits. Fear not to look into my soul—it is not all unsullied like yours, but—"

"Ah, Mr. Hastings! do not use such language if you would have me believe you in earnest. What soul is all unsullied?—not mine, alas!"

"Then, Evelyn, I may with the more confidence claim your forbearance and your friendship. Your love I do not ask—that is the portion of a younger, a happier, it may be a better man; but may not our souls mingle in a senti-

ment as tender, as profound, but less exacting, less selfish than love?—shall it be so, Evelyn?"

Evelyn could no longer distrust the sincerity of Euston Hastings—falsehood spoke not with such earnest tones—pleaded not with such truthful eyes. He, of whom she had heard it said, that, but for the apathy which paralyzed his power, he might sway men's hearts at will, did in truth desire to link her spirit to his. She seemed to have passed into a new sphere of existence. Loftier thoughts dawned upon her mind—pure and blissful emotions filled her heart. Euston Hastings heard her quickened breath, saw the color flushing and fading on her cheek, and felt the hand which he had continued to clasp, and which she had not withdrawn, trembling in his; and his own heart throbbed, and his dark eyes kindled with a glow of triumph as he exclaimed, "Evelyn, you consent—henceforth there is a bond between our souls!"

He raised her hand to his lips, then, emboldened by her passiveness, bowed his head and pressed with those lips her glowing cheek.

Minutes followed of that silence which is the spirit's most expressive language, and then Euston Hastings said, "How proud should I be to avow to all the bond which unites us! but so false are the world's views, that I must deny myself this gratification. Feelings too refined for the comprehension of the vulgar are ever stigmatized as wrong, and these, the purest, the least earthly I have ever known, would bring censure upon you and perhaps, causeless as it would be, jealousy to your lover. Blush not thus, dear Evelyn," he whispered, "there are no secrets between us now. For his sake and for yours too, in this misjudging world, we must be to others as we have been; but there will be a sweet consciousness of sympathy in our hearts, and there will be moments, fleeting but blissful, in which that con-

sciousness may express itself in looks at least, if not in words."

He paused, but Evelyn could find neither words nor voice for a reply, and he resumed in a gayer manner, "But now tell me what you were observing so earnestly when I came in."

She showed him the oxalis, and said, "That little flower, which was just unrolling its petals to the sun, and is already closing them again as its rays have passed by it."

"And of what did it remind you?—Shall I tell you?" he asked, as he saw that Evelyn hesitated.

"Yes," she answered, with a smile.

"You compared it to the heart which unfolds itself to the beams of its sun—Love."

The comparison was so obvious, that there was little hazard in the surmise, yet Evelyn looked surprised.

"And now you are wondering how I can read your thoughts. Do you forget there is now a chain between our souls by which the thoughts and feelings of each pass to the other with the quickness of the electric flash?"

At this moment the door of the adjoining room was opened, and Mrs. Mabury and Madame L'Egaré entered, accompanied by Everard Irving, whom they had met at the door as they descended from their carriage. Listlessness was the prevailing expression of Euston Hastings' countenance and manner as he advanced languidly, but with all his usual self-possession, to meet them. Evelyn could not so soon recover herself, but probably Everard, as well as the ladies whom he attended, interpreted her slight embarrassment in a manner flattering to himself.

"Why did you desert us?" asked Mrs. Mabury of her friend Mr. Hastings.

"Because I could not aid two ladies of such exquisite taste in their selection of laces and silks, and I could not

hope, till that was accomplished, to win your attention from a subject of such engrossing interest. May I hope that the relative claims of blue and fawn, and pink and drab have been settled to your satisfaction?" he added, addressing Madame L'Egaré, who, in answering him, launched, as he had expected, into a contrast between New York and Paris, concluding with her regrets for her exile, and thus completely diverting attention from Evelyn.

CHAPTER V.

Learn by a mortal yearning to ascend
Towards a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;
For this the passion to excess was driven,
That self might be annulled.

WORDSWORTH.

AND now let us take a glance at Mary Raymond in her retired abode in —— street, Baltimore. It is early morning. In Mrs. Maclaurin's small and plainly, though neatly furnished parlor, a wood fire burns clearly and cheerfully. There stands the breakfast-table with its snowy cloth and polished urn; and there, beside the fire, is another table, on which are placed a Bible, a prayer-book, and a small bell. Mrs. Maclaurin enters. Her tall form is slightly bent, and the hair which is seen beneath the border of her plain cap, shows little of its former glossy black among the snows of many winters. She is dressed in mourning, which she has never laid aside since the death of her husband, yet nothing gloomy, nothing discontented appears in her countenance. Its expression betokens more than resignation; there is the serenity of a mind at peace with itself and with the world, the joy of a heart living in the light of its Father's smile. She rings the bell, and in a few minutes Mary enters the parlor. Her cheek is not so pale as when we parted from her, but there still lingers a touch of sadness in the smile with which she returns the affectionate and cheerful greeting of her friend. Mary's entrance is soon followed by that of

several domestics, who modestly seat themselves near the door. Mrs. Maclaurin selects a hymn and hands it to Mary, who reads it aloud. Mrs. Maclaurin's domestics are also her Sunday scholars, and this hymn they have already learned, and are therefore able to join with her and Mary in singing it to a simple but melodious air. The hymn concluded, Mary reads a chapter in the Bible, and then, all kneeling together, Mrs. Maclaurin presents the thanks of all to Him who has preserved them through the night, and to whose kind guidance they commit themselves for the day. This simple and heartfelt worship concluded, a salutation and inquiries, respectful on the one side, and kind and cordial on the other, pass between the mistress and servants, and then the preparation for breakfast begins.

This meal is soon concluded, and the few directions required in so small and well-arranged a household having been given, Mrs. Maclaurin and Mary both engage in some feminine employment, which occupies the fingers without engaging the mind. They sit together, apparently for the pleasure of conversation, but Mrs. Maclaurin soon finds that, as usual of late, she must sustain the conversation herself. Her companion indeed listens with an appearance of interest when she speaks, and answers always with pleasantness, but she quickly relapses into a fit of musing so deep, that she more than once starts with surprise when addressed.

Mrs. Maclaurin proposes that Mary shall read to her, and she takes a book. She has read perhaps for half an hour, when Mrs. Maclaurin says, "That is a fine sentiment and well-expressed—do you not think so?"

Mary colors and hesitates, and turns to the book to ascertain what the sentiment is; then, assenting to her friend's remark, would proceed with the reading, but Mrs. Maclaurin stops her.

"Nay, Mary, I will not make a machine of you; you

shall not read for me, while your thoughts are wandering away to distant objects."

Mary began to stammer out an apology, but Mrs. Maclaurin said, "There is no need of an apology, my dear. You have not displeased me by your inattention to my pet author, nor would that inattention have grieved me had it been a single instance; but it does grieve me greatly, because it is but one of many instances of that abstraction which marks a painfully-preoccupied mind. I have wished to speak of this before, Mary, but I have feared to wound you, and now I must ask your permission before I proceed. May I go on?"

"Oh, yes! my dear friend—my mother's friend—say all you would say, it cannot be so painful as my own thoughts are—thoughts which I vainly tried to escape by coming here, which I have sometimes wished to reveal to you, but could not, dared not."

Mary's voice was lost in sobs. Mrs. Maclaurin approached her, and, seating herself near her, folded her arms tenderly around her and drew her to her bosom.

"It was not necessary for you to reveal those thoughts to me, Mary, for I knew them."

Gentle as were Mrs. Maclaurin's accents, soothing as was her manner, a thrill passed over Mary's frame, and she hid her face more entirely on the friendly bosom on which it rested.

Mrs. Maclaurin continued, "I know not their cause, dearest, nor is it necessary that I should"—Mary ceased to tremble—"but I am too well acquainted with the signs of a stricken heart not to have seen them in you. I have seen that life has disappointed you, and that you have been ready to turn from its scarce-tasted cup with an impatient loathing, ready to exclaim, What has life for me? Mary, do not be angry, or suppose that I cannot sympathize with

your sorrows, when I say, that life offers to you, as largely as to any of God's creatures, the highest good which it encloses in its bosom."

Mary made an impatient gesture.

"Nay, listen to me, dearest," said her friend, laying her hand affectionately and soothingly upon her head. "You have been bereaved, and, it may be, disappointed in your affections; but life has nobler purposes, a higher good than the gratification of these. Oh, Mary! with most of us, it is only when we are nigh unto death that we learn what it is to live. We talk of acquainting ourselves with the lives of eminent persons, when we read a record of the events through which they have passed; we call our own lives desolate, because events of a painful nature have befallen us; but these are not our life. Life—the principle which makes us sentient, intelligent, active beings; the principle by which we hold converse with the living Spirit of beauty and goodness; by which,—if we pervert not its heavenly aims,—assimilating with that Spirit incarnated in the adorable Saviour, we rise from the finite to the Infinite, and, resting on the bosom of Love, find blessedness when that which made our happiness has vanished from our grasp;—this life, no events can make desolate. Sorrow may darken our sky, but the loving, trusting child of God rises above its gloomy cloud, and there shines his life supremely bright."

Mary raised her head—her eyes, on whose lashes tears were yet trembling, were cast down, and her cheeks glowed as she said, almost in a whisper, "I understand you, and I sometimes have felt as you describe, but only for moments. From those moments I have drawn all the strength that has sustained me; but there are very many long hours when I cannot rise above the desolate earth, when my whole being seems comprised in the affections which—"

Mary paused abruptly and covered her face with her hands.

"Fear not to speak to me, dear Mary—the affections which—"

"Which have found no response, and which I yet strive vainly to recall," murmured Mary, in husky and agitated tones.

"And why should you recall them, Mary? Strive only to purify them from the exactingness of selfish passion, and then, though they should be such that you would joyfully die for the good of their object, you need not repress them. It is not the strength of our affection for which we should blush, but for its character. Let it be a pure and generous affection, and we shall find blessedness in its exercise. Do not think I mean to reflect on you, dearest, when I say that what are called the sufferings of disappointed affections, often derive their chief bitterness from the goadings of pride. It is more blessed to give than to receive, says he who never erred, and though earth should offer little else to you, you will never fail to find in it objects for the exercise of your kindly affections, of your tender sympathies, of your generous action."

There was silence for a few minutes, while Mary sat apparently reflecting on what her friend had said. At length, in slow and measured tones, and without removing the hand which shaded her eyes, she said, "Man may find happiness in this independent exercise of his powers, but woman is so dependent in her nature—she needs support—and I, when my spirit faints and grows weary, where shall I rest?"

"On God, my beloved child. He will support and strengthen you."

"But there are times, as I have already told you—much, much of my life—when I cannot raise myself to Him—when, like the dove from the ark, my spirit wanders over the earth in vain search of a resting-place."

"You will find none, Mary; or, if you do, a deluge of affliction, or the waters of death, will soon bear you from it. God would have you soar above the earth, not rest upon it. You spoke but a few minutes since of woman's dependent nature. Believe me, my dear Mary, much of this dependence is the result of education rather than of nature—of an education which has taught her to draw her impulses and her rewards from others rather than from her own heart and from Heaven. Your parents sought to avoid this great evil in your education, but the influences of society were against them, and see—those whose approval you most desired are removed from you, and cannot witness your efforts; and your accustomed avocations—your most useful and your most pleasing pursuits are alike disregarded, or entered into with a listlessness that renders them a task—friends who might have exacted from you some exertion are neglected—and I, of all who loved you, have been chosen, because you believed that here you might be left to the quiet indulgence of your sorrow."

"Oh, no—no! there was no selfish indulgence, but a great and painful effort in removing myself from——I mean in coming here."

"It was a noble effort, dear Mary—an effort worthy of yourself; but is that to be the last *act* of your life? Are your powers to be henceforth wasted in vain and selfish regrets? You have been now a month with me—in that time what has your life produced of good for yourself, or for others—"

"Oh, spare me! spare me!" cried Mary, with streaming tears.

"My precious child—dear to me for your own sake and for your mother's—if I probe severely, it is that I may heal. Listen to me, and if you would win back peace to your bosom, and overcome all that is unworthy in your

feelings, make one vigorous effort. You will find every subsequent one less and less difficult. Begin at once, not to-morrow but to-day, to LIVE again—to cultivate your powers, to exercise your affections, and to look upward and inward for your reward. Come now, this morning, and make a visit with me. Do not shrink back and look so deprecatingly—it is not to the abode of wealth and fashion—it is not even to renew the friendly associations once so valued that I invite you, but to a scene of suffering poverty, where your sympathies will be irresistibly awakened, and your heart will impel you to actions of which its approval will constitute the sweetest reward."

Mary could not refuse such an invitation, and retiring to her room, she soon appeared, equipped for a walk, and with a composed if not cheerful countenance. Mrs. Maclaurin was ready, and taking her young friend's arm, she left the house, and turning, at a short distance from it, into an obscure street which was quite unknown to Mary, she passed some six or eight houses, all looking like the abodes of poverty, and stopped before one of wood, whose unpainted walls bore the marks of many a storm. From the lower windows many panes of glass had been broken, and were replaced by bundles of rags or garments of various colors. There was neither bell nor knocker to the door, but at a rap of Mrs. Maclaurin's knuckles upon its panel, a sash was thrown up, and a woman's head protruded with the question, "What d'ye want?"

"We have come to see Elizabeth Barnard—pray, open the door for us," said Mrs. Maclaurin gently.

Slamming the sash down, she came towards the door, through which her shuffling tread and muttering tones sounded little like a welcome.

"How is Elizabeth to-day?" asked Mrs. Maclaurin.

"I'm sure I don't know—how should I? I've got my

own business to mind—I dare say she's bad enough, but you can go up and see."

Mrs. Maclaurin, followed by Mary, ascended the steps leading to the next story, and paused there to rest herself. Two doors opened on the passage in which they stood, and Mary asked if she should knock at one of them.

"No," said Mrs. Maclaurin, "we must go up another pair of stairs."

They ascended accordingly, and Mary found herself in an open garret, across one corner of which was drawn a tattered curtain. Raising this, Mrs. Maclaurin whispered to her companion, "She is asleep," at the same time signing to her to approach.

Mary passed under the curtain and stood beside a thin mattress, laid upon the floor, on which was extended the pale and emaciated form of a young girl. Her head was supported by a single pillow without a case, and some of her clothing was added to the scanty covering of her bed. Even in her sleep there was an expression of care on her pale face which was deeply touching in one so young, and as Mary stood silently gazing on her, tears gathered in her eyes, and—"I have murmured and been impatient with my lot,"—was the thought of her self-reproachful heart.

The sleeper moved, and Mrs. Maclaurin advanced nearer to her mattress, while Mary drew out of sight. She opened her eyes and looked at first with some wildness on her visiter; but as memory awoke, a smile lightened her haggard face, and she feebly murmured, "Oh, ma'am! how good you are to come again!"

"I have come now with the hope of making you more comfortable before I leave you—but how are you to-day?"

"So weak, ma'am; but for that I should be almost well, for I have had no fever for two days now."

While Elizabeth was speaking, a noise was heard on the

stairs, and one of Mrs. Maclaurin's servants entered with some nourishment for the invalid. As she rose to take it she perceived Mary, and a slight flush passed over her pale cheek.

"This is a young friend of mine, Elizabeth, who hopes to be of service to you," said Mrs. Maclaurin, who saw and pitied the natural emotion of shame from which that flush proceeded.

Mary advanced, and kneeling on the floor beside the mattress, spoke to the poor girl with soothing tenderness, and supported her while she sat up. When she had again lain down and the servant had been dismissed, Mary asked if the rooms in the house were all occupied.

"This place," she said, "must be very cold at night—it is cold even now, and you can have no fire here. Is there no room you can have in this house, or do you not feel strong enough to be removed in a carriage to a more comfortable place?"

"There are rooms enough here, ma'am," said the sufferer feebly, "and when I was well and could work, I had a very nice room on the second floor and found myself, and lived very comfortably; but when I got sick, I had so little money that I knew I couldn't pay Mrs. Conolly long—so I told her how it was, and she let me have this place for nothing."

"For nothing! I should think so," said Mary, as the color flushed to her brow, and her eyes sparkled with indignation.

"Oh, ma'am! you know she might have turned me into the street; and besides, she sent word to the doctor that told this good lady how ill I was. I ought to be thankful to her, I know."

Poor Elizabeth! she spoke as if the duty was not easy.

"And this room in which you formerly lived, is there

another tenant in it now?" asked Mary, in gentler tones than she had last used—for there was something holy in Elizabeth's efforts to speak charitably of her uncharitable landlady, before which even a generous anger was rebuked.

"No, ma'am, it is empty still; but then, you know ma'am, Mrs. Conolly has a better chance of letting it so, than if there was a sick person in it. I had very hard thoughts about it at first, I acknowledge," said the poor girl as tears sprang to her eyes, "when I thought I was going to die here; but I know they were wrong thoughts," she continued, turning her eyes on Mrs. Maclaurin, as if to excuse herself to her,—"for I, who was too proud to be indebted to old and kind friends when I was left a desolate orphan, ought not surely to wish that a stranger, like Mrs. Conolly, should forget her own interest for me. Yes—it was my own pride that brought me here—pride!" she repeated with bitter emphasis, as casting a rapid glance around her, she clasped her emaciated hands over her eyes and burst into tears.

Mary could not speak for her own tears, but she laid her hand gently on the sufferer's, and Mrs. Maclaurin spoke soothingly to her, telling her that she should soon be made more comfortable, and that when she was quite well they would hear all she had to say, but till then she must neither speak nor think of any thing agitating. The servant soon returned with a supply of bedding—clean sheets, pillows, blankets. Mrs. Maclaurin had heard only the evening before of this claimant on her charities from her own physician, who called to request that, as she was not very distant from her, she would provide her with some nourishment for the night. This Mrs. Maclaurin had done, and accompanying the servant who carried it, had become deeply interested in the suffering Elizabeth. It was late

at night, however, and she feared to make any changes which would involve exposure to the invalid in the chilling atmosphere of the garret at that hour. Elizabeth, too, seemed drowsy, and disliked the idea of any exertion. Mrs. Maclaurin had, therefore, been compelled to leave her for another night on her uncomfortable pallet.

On the entrance of the servant, Mary, making a sign to Mrs. Maclaurin to follow her, went out, or rather passed to the other side of the curtain.

"My dear friend!" she exclaimed, as soon as Mrs. Maclaurin stood by her side, "that poor girl must not lie there —we must get a room for her. Do you think she could be removed to another house?"

"That would not be necessary, my love,—you have heard her say that there are very comfortable rooms in this house."

"But she will need some attention—some care, and if she stay here with this unkind woman she will require a nurse."

"Wait a moment," said Mrs. Maclaurin, and raising the curtain, she asked, "Elizabeth, did you not tell me that you had a friend who had taken care of you when you were at the worst, and who came now every day to look after you?"

"Yes, ma'am—Mrs. Roberts. She is poor herself, and a widow, with two little children to support, or I should have wanted nothing. This mattress and pillow are hers."

"Why did she not take you to her house?" asked Mary, looking over her friend's shoulder.

"She has but one room, ma'am, for herself and her children; but she would have given me part of that, if I had not been too ill to move when she first came to me."

"Do you think she would be willing to remove here?' asked Mrs. Maclaurin.

"She got in debt to her landlord, ma'am, when her children were ill with the scarlet fever, and I do not think he would like her to go away till she had paid him; besides, moving costs money, if you have ever so little to move."

"But, if her rent were paid there, and her expenses in moving paid too, do you think she would be willing to come here?" asked Mary.

"Oh yes, ma'am! I am sure she would," and pleased expectation lit up Elizabeth's languid eyes, and colored her pale cheek.

Mary's face was radiant with smiles as she turned away to accomplish her benevolent designs.

"You will come with me," she said to Mrs. Maclaurin.

"No, my love, it is your work, and you shall finish it yourself. But stay—we have yet some things to learn from Elizabeth, and before I ask her questions which will still farther raise her hopes, let me remind you that what you are proposing will require no small sum of money to accomplish, and before you make any promises you must be quite sure that you can perform them."

"Mr. Beresford paid me my half-yearly allowance of pocket-money on the morning he left me, though it was somewhat in advance. This amounted to one hundred and fifty dollars. It is untouched, and I have not quite exhausted my previous supply. May I venture on this?" she asked with an assured smile.

"Oh, yes! without doubt,—but Elizabeth can tell us what the rent was. We had better trust as little as need be to Mrs. Conolly's conscience."

Elizabeth said that she had paid one dollar a week for the room and furniture, and that she had always been required to pay in advance. Furnished with this information and the address of Elizabeth's friend, Mrs. Roberts, Mary was at length suffered to depart. Her interview with Mrs.

Conolly was soon satisfactorily concluded; for the sight of Mary's purse, and her offer to pay at once a month's rent of the room in advance, transformed her into an obsequious attendant. The apartment into which she ushered Mary was large, and looked cheerful as the sunlight streamed into its uncurtained windows; a rag-carpet covered part of the floor; there was in it a good bedstead and tolerable bed, a few chairs and a table. Having informed her friend of the arrangement she had made, and leaving her to direct the servant and Mrs. Conolly—who now readily offered her services—in preparing the room for its intended occupants, Mary set out on her visit to Mrs. Roberts without again seeing Elizabeth.

Mrs. Roberts felt a deep interest in Elizabeth Barnard, and Mary's proposal that she should take care of her, and receive immediately a month's advance of the remuneration justly due to her as a nurse, enabled her to gratify this interest without disregard to justice or to the claims of her children, and it was therefore gladly accepted.

"How soon shall I say to Elizabeth you will be with her?" asked Mary, as she took leave of her.

"It will not take me long to pack up, ma'am," said she, glancing with a smile on the few articles of furniture in her neatly-kept rooms; "I will follow you in an hour at farthest."

At Mrs. Conolly's door lay a load of wood which a man was engaged in sawing, and as Mary opened the door of the room in which the now courteous landlady told her she would find those whom she sought, the cheerful blaze of a wood fire played on her face. The sunbeams had been shaded by curtains for which Mrs. Maclaurin had sent home, fearing that the light would be too glaring for a feeble invalid. There, on a comfortable bed, supported by soft pillows and dressed in a cap and gown of spotless whiteness,

lay the poor girl whom the friends had found so desolate and untended on her hard pallet in the open garret. Her eyes were closed when Mary entered, but noiselessly as she moved, her presence was perceived by senses sharpened by illness. Opening her eyes, Elizabeth fixed them with an expression of mingled reverence and tenderness on her youthful benefactress; then, suddenly stretching her arms towards her, she strove to speak, and burst into tears. Mary advanced to the side of the bed, kissed her cheek and wept with her.

"Oh! how can I thank you?" at length sobbed Elizabeth.

"It is I, dear Elizabeth, who should be most thankful," said Mary, "for I am sure it is I who am happiest; but we will both thank God, who gave me the power to be useful to you; and good Mrs. Maclaurin too," she added, turning to her friend, "who brought me to see you, and who has suffered me to share in her efforts to serve you. But your friend, Mrs. Roberts, will be here in an hour—are you not a little afraid her children will disturb you?"

Thus Mary gently endeavored to turn Elizabeth's attention from herself and her benefits.

"Oh, no!" Elizabeth replied, "they are such good, quiet children, that I am sure they will not disturb me; besides, they are at school most of the day."

Mrs. Roberts was punctual to her time, and as a single cart brought her furniture, it was soon, with the aid of her children, placed in the room and the large closet attached to it, and she sat down, by two o'clock, with a quiet, home like air, which did much to compose the excited Elizabeth. Mrs. Maclaurin and Mary now took their leave, the latter giving Mrs. Roberts some money to purchase whatever she might think necessary for her young *protégée*, whom she promised to visit again on the morrow.

"And now, Mary, what think you of life?" asked Mrs. Maclaurin, as they stood again together in her parlor.

Tears glistened in Mary's eyes as she replied, "That it is full of a blessedness of which I, in my low selfishness, could not conceive. 'How unworthy I must have seemed to you while my whole soul was so absorbed with myself that earth seemed barren and desolate because my desires were ungratified.'"

"You reproach yourself too bitterly, my child. Your fault was one in which you have many companions. Selfishness is the universal sin of humanity; the best escape from it only at moments, and those moments are foretastes of Heaven."

For many days Mary spent a part of every day with her young protégée. She heard her simple story, wept with her over the memory of her father—a clergyman in a retired village—whose death had left this only and indulged child, at sixteen, without resource, except in the compassion of friends or the exertion of her yet immature powers. With the self-confidence of youth, the last had seemed the most desirable to the child of love, who found something cold and selfish in the most kindly-meant offers of the few who would, for the father's sake, have saved the child from want. With a firmness which they styled obstinacy, and an energy which seemed to them bold recklessness in one so young, she received the small sum of money which remained from the sale of their furniture after the expenses of her father's funeral had been defrayed, and set out for the nearest city, Baltimore, to seek employment. Months passed away while she was applying in vain to school after school, family after family, for a situation as teacher. Her purse and her hopes were alike low, when, in the cheap boarding-house to which her diminished resources had led her, she met Mrs. Roberts. Disappointment and trial were familiar to the poor

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widow, and she quickly recognised traces of their presence with Elizabeth. Her benevolent sympathy was excited for the young stranger. She soon won her confidence, and offered to procure her employment with the needle, by which she supported herself. The offer was gladly accepted, and its results are known to the reader. Elizabeth had lived by it in health, but had been unable to make any provision for illness.

As some interest may have been excited for the poor Elizabeth, we will say, before we take our leave of her, that, when her health was re-established, she obtained a place as a teacher through the influence of Mrs. Maclaurin, and that the kindness which her sorrows had first awakened, was perpetuated by the excellent qualities which she manifested.

This seems to the transient observer but a quickly-passing episode in Mary's life, yet its impressions interwove themselves with her whole being, and greatly influenced her future destiny. She had felt that life has higher, nobler enjoyments than any gratifications having reference only to ourselves—even though they should be gratifications connected with our warmest affections. In the light which had flashed upon her soul, she had seen plainly that her hopeless despondency, her bitter repining, had their root in a low selfishness which she was too noble to indulge, and thenceforth she resisted them earnestly, though her resistance was marked rather by the fitful energy of one who fears each moment that his foe will conquer, than by the calm strength of the assured victor. She hurried from employment to employment, sought with avidity the society she had lately shunned, and had not her mourning prevented, would probably have entered eagerly into amusements which had formerly possessed little charm for her. That she was thus prevented Mrs. Maclaurin could not regret, for

she knew that in the world's giddy round of thought-dispelling pleasure, Mary might forget her trials, but she would not rise above them. She had respected too much the womanly delicacy of her young friend, to pry curiously into her heart's recesses; but whatever had been the causes of her sorrow, she knew that they had been appointed by Infinite Love and Infinite Wisdom not to be forgotten, but to be improved,—to purify and elevate the heart they pierced. To her, as to Mary, life—external life—was cold and barren, and she knew that for Mary as for her, this unlovely form enclosed a spirit of beauty and of joy. She knew, too, that to those who covered the form with the gaudy trappings and false shows of earth, the spirit would never become visible; but that they should see it and enjoy it and become one with it who, cultivating their own spiritual natures, developed by exercise all by which we hold affinity with the Beautiful and the Good.

"Ah! is it possible I see my dear pupil?"

The exclamation was from Mr. Manelli, Mary's former drawing-master, and was uttered on meeting her accidentally in the streets of Baltimore. "And how long have you returned?" he asked, as Mary paused to welcome him with the most animated expressions of pleasure.

"I have been here six weeks."

"Six weeks, and I do not see or hear from you!—I am grieved." And Mr. Manelli's saddened countenance and voice made the quick tears start into Mary's eyes, as, passing her hand through his arm with a daughter's affectionate freedom, she said—

"You must pardon me, dear sir, for indeed I have scarcely been out anywhere till very lately, and I was even now on my way to see you and Aspasié."

"Were you?—that was kind." A smile, gentle and loving as that of infancy, lit up the old man's face as he

added, "You were always a good girl—pardon me—I should say now, a gracious lady."

"No—no," said Mary, quickly, "let me feel that you are just the same to me as in old days, when I was your pet-pupil and Aspasié's playfellow."

"You are—you are the same dear child to me, and to Aspasié too. How joyful she will be to see you!"

Mr. Manelli quickened his steps at this thought, as if he was impatient to give his daughter such pleasure. While he and Mary are proceeding towards his home, we will introduce him more particularly to the acquaintance of the reader. Fancy a tall and muscular frame, with the wide shoulders stooping slightly forward—an inclination which seems the effect of habit rather than of feebleness or age,—a face whose features are all large, the forehead high and broad, especially in the region above the temples where phrenologists locate ideality—perhaps we should have said the head rather than the forehead, for the long straight hair, in which black and gray are mingled in about equal proportions, hangs carelessly about the face, rendering it difficult to tell where the forehead really terminates,—the eyes are of dark gray, and are set deep, beneath bushy brows—but what a soul looks out from them! Gentle, loving, guileless as an infant's seems the spirit that meets yours in those glances. It awakens your tenderness, a tenderness which has something almost protecting in its nature, but even while you look perchance the expression changes, and thought so profound is mirrored there, that you bow with reverence before the sage, and wait for his teachings with earnest attention.

But Mary and her companion are before his dwelling, and that too deserves some description—not the house itself, for it is a common-enough two-story building of wood, and not very newly painted; but it stands far back from the street, and is approached through paths bordered by rose-trees,

which, even at this late season, are bending under their wealth of flowers, and the beds on either side are gay with autumnal flowers—china-asters, dahlias, and chrysanthimums. The low porch is covered with vines whose red berries show where lately bloomed the woodbine, the honeysuckle, or the sweetbrier. The windows are open and give a view, not of paved streets and brick walls, but of the bright blue waters of the Petapsco, on whose shore Baltimore stands, studded with sails. There was no necessity to ring or knock for entrance. As Mary stepped within the door, she heard the warblings of a pleasing but not very powerful voice in the parlor. Mr. Manelli looked at her with a smile. The voice was Aspasié's, whose gayety of heart often thus found vent in song.

Aspasié Manelli resembled far more her English mother than her Italian father in the pure red and white of her complexion, in a countenance ingenuous and pleasing, yet marked rather by sturdy good sense than by the sentiment and imagination that spoke in every line of the painter's face. Her figure was fine, and her buoyant movements seemed the result of mental as well as physical health. Father and daughter each represented to the other all which links the heart to family, home, country. Born and educated in Italy, married in England, Mr. Manelli had spent the last twenty years of his life in America. He had many friends, for one of such warm affections and such benevolence could not fail to make friends; but the death of his wife had left him with only Aspasié of all the world whom he could claim as his own. Neither wife nor daughter had been able to sympathize with his lofty abstractions, his beautiful imaginings; but they reverenced in him what they did not understand. He seemed to them to belong to a superior order of beings, and it was their pride and pleasure to free him, by their diligence and good management, from all those cares which would have interfered

with higher pursuits, binding his spirit down to earth. They were at first unwilling that he should engage in so unimaginative an employment as giving lessons in drawing; but he replied to their gentle dissuasions, that it gave him great pleasure, as he seldom met a pupil who did not give him a lesson in the science of mind while he was taking one in the art of drawing. It will be perceived from this that Mr. Manelli was a metaphysician as well as an artist.

Aspasié's surprise at seeing Mary was almost as great as her joy; yet its ebullition was scarcely over, when she reminded her father that he would just have time, with his utmost speed, to fulfil the engagement from which his meeting with Mary had diverted him.

"Dear Aspasié! can nothing make you forget business?" asked Mr. Manelli, with a slightly reproachful air.

"Nothing makes me forget my father," was Aspasié's reply.

"I believe it—you are a good child, and I will go—but" turning to Mary, "you will not go, I hope—you will be here when I come back?"

"Certainly she will," said Aspasié; "Mary would not come only to make us a call when we have not seen her for months—she will spend the day with us, I am sure." Mary assented, and Aspasié continued—"So go, my father, you will come back to us with a free mind, and we will think no more of business for the rest of the day."

Mr. Manelli returned before dinner, and the afternoon was given to social enjoyment. Mary was touched by the kindness of her friends, and exerted herself to show her appreciation of it; yet, as the day advanced towards its close, she often relapsed into revery from which she started with alarm at the sound of her own name. Once, too, she betrayed a feeling which she regretted. Her old master had taken her to his studio, to see a painting nearly com-

pleted. The subject was Socrates drinking the hemlock, surrounded by his pupils. Not caring, in his expression of what was true in principle, to adhere rigidly to historical fact, the artist had enriched his picture by the representations of all the most distinguished disciples of the sage. Among these, a youth of great beauty, whose face was marked by an ardent, ingenuous spirit, represented Alcibiades before he had plunged into the dissipation which degraded his nature and sullied his glory. And this face, so pleasing, so full of reverence and a sorrowful tenderness, was strikingly like Everard Irving. Mary, spite of her efforts, returned again and again to its contemplation. Mr. Manelli observed this with a smile. At length he said, "You see the likeness, I suspect, which my Aspasić talks of—she says Mr. Irving might have sat for my Alcibiades,—but where is Mr. Irving? I did not think when you went away that I should ever see you separately again."

The blood rushed to Mary's face, and with a manner at once proud and cold she replied, "When I last saw Mr. Irving he was in New York."

The next moment she remembered the artist's sensitive nature, and her heart smote her. She raised her eyes timidly to his face. The smile of good-humored raillery had vanished from it, and as he caught her glance, he said, "Pardon an old man's foolish jest, lady—your goodness makes me forget myself."

Mary placed her hand in his as she said, pleadingly, "Nay, it is I who should ask pardon for my abruptness—I was full of other and sad thoughts just then—Pardon me," she added with a forced smile," and I will tell you news of your favorite, Mr. Irving."

"You need not bribe me," said Mr. Manelli, affectionately; "if you had offended me, I could not resist a single word like that pardon from you."

"Thank you,—now you shall have my news as a free gift. Mr. Irving is engaged to the daughter of my guardian, Mr. Beresford. Her father withholds his consent on account of her youth; but as he is too good-natured to be very obstinate in his opposition, you will probably, before long, hear of their marriage."

"To the daughter of Mr. Beresford!" Mr. Manelli exclaimed with surprise.

"Yes—and if you could see her, you would not think it so astonishing."

Mary had spoken with effort. Mr. Manelli did not reply, and to her great relief the subject soon seemed forgotten. But this was only seeming. Mr. Manelli was one who, while he failed to see the plainest manifestations of selfish and low feelings, perceived with remarkable quickness the movements of tender and generous affections, and he had long been quite assured that his young favorites, Mary Raymond and Everard Irving, were destined for each other. He felt pained, perplexed, that it was not so. He could not withdraw his thoughts from them, and he, like Mary, began to fall into reveries. In the evening, when deprived of the stimulus of her company, he became quite *distrait*.

"Are you thinking over the pleasures of the day?" asked Aspasié.

"I was thinking of our friend," he replied. "Sorrow has given a tenderness and spirituality to her face which make her perfectly lovely."

The next morning Mary was surprised by an early visit from Mr. Manelli. She was trifling over a piece of embroidery, which she laid aside at his entrance. After chatting awhile, he took it up.

"It is pretty," he said, "but you can do so much better things. What are you doing with the pencil and brush now? You have not given them up, I hope."

"It has been long since I have used them."

"Why so?"

"I have wanted both the health and the spirits necessary for such an employment."

"Spirits! you should paint to get spirits!" exclaimed Mr. Manelli.

Mary smiled faintly.

"You smile—you do not believe me," he continued. "Ah! if I could tell you all that painting has done for me—how it has been father, mother, brother, sister, and of late years, wife to me, you would be convinced."

"I doubt not, sir, it has been all this to you who handle the pencil of a master,—but I, you know, am only a lover of the art."

"And it is that very love which gives it all its power. If you painted ever so well, and your power came from practice only, or was all taught by rule, I would not speak so to you; but you are, I know, a genuine lover of art—you have an eye and a soul for the beautiful, and to paint, with you, would be only to leave a tendency of your nature to develop itself freely."

Mr. Manelli paused, but Mary had nothing to reply, and he resumed by asking—"May I tell you some of my thoughts about painting without danger of wearying you?"

"Oh, yes! pray let me hear them."

"A true love for art springs, I think, from a desire to represent conceptions, to give expression to ideas for which we cannot find full utterance in words. These ideas are elevated and spiritual—they do not belong to our time relations. In communion with them we must rise to their sphere, and thus the true artist is dissevered from low and common things, and becomes elevated, spiritualized. I have told you how much I owe to painting, and you thought perhaps—Ah! that is because he had to leave

kindred and country, and become a lonely man,—but I care not how happy a man s life may be, it will not reach his ideal of happiness. He will meet with annoyances, contradictions, littlenesses, that chafe and wound his spirit, —I meet with such now; but they do not fret me long, for I go to my room—I paint—paint—I surround myself with the Beautiful, which is only the Good made visible— my spirit goes out to it,—I love it—I feel that my nature was made for it, and then I remember that he who has wounded me and vexed me, was made too for the Good and the Beautiful,—and if he has lost his fellowship with it I pity him, and so, I forgive him, and all the bitterness and the vexation passes from my heart. It is thus that true art conducts to religious faith. Through the Beautiful we are brought into communion with the Good—"

Mr. Manelli was here interrupted by a voice gently but gravely pronouncing, "There is but one good, that is—"

"God," said the artist. "You are right, madam," and he turned to Mrs. Maclaurin, who had listened to his remarks with interest and pleasure, yet with some apprehension that his views were too mystical and vague to touch the heart. "You are right, madam. He is the one absolutely good—and thus the true artist becomes the devout worshipper. He enters the temple," he added with a smile, "through 'the gate which is called Beautiful.'"

Mrs. Maclaurin smiled too, but she shook her head as she replied, "That is a pleasing thought, but I fear it cannot be substantiated. Surely the best artists have not been the most devout men, and art attained its highest development with the heathen, and perhaps I might say atheistic Greeks."

"Pardon me—I find I have not quite clearly expressed my meaning. Permit me to explain. An artist's celebrity is sometimes derived from his mechanical skill in expressing,

it may be, the conceptions of others; but, in my opinion, it is the noble conception which distinguishes the true artist, and a conception to be noble must be pure—"

"Raphael and Michael Angelo were surely true artists," objected Mrs. Maclaurin, "yet they—"

"Showed themselves to be but men, and living in an age of the utmost licentiousness of manners, were not altogether free themselves from the charge; but who can look at the pure conceptions of Raphael and not feel that in entering into debasing associations he must have resisted more powerfully than most men the tendencies of his nature? The influence of his art was to make him a worshipper—the influence of his age was adverse to this, and sometimes prevailed, for the artist too is a sinful man and needs a Saviour."

Mrs. Maclaurin was satisfied with this last observation, and would have left one of her objections unanswered, but Mary, who delighted to hear her old master thus called forth, asked—"And how do you account for it that the heathen, and perhaps, as Mrs. Maclaurin says, atheistic Greeks, were the noblest artists the world has ever known?"

"The inspiration of the artist is not the inspiration of the prophet or teacher. The Grecian artist, I doubt not, worshipped, but alas! it was an unknown God—the Christian artist knows whom he worships."

Neither Mrs. Maclaurin nor Mary had any further objections to offer to Mr. Manelli's views, and after a moment's pause, he said—

"And now I may venture to make the proposal for which I commenced this long explanation. You, Miss Raymond, are one to whom this beautiful gate of the temple of peace and purity stands open—do not refuse to enter in. You say you have not painted for long—come to

my studio, I will show you engravings of some of the finest pictures in the world,—you will see something that will kindle your soul, you shall have it to paint. Paint there, you will, and I will help you on. By-and-by you will not need to copy,—you will have confidence in yourself, and design for yourself,—you will become a true artist,—will you come?

It was impossible to refuse, and from this day forward Mary spent much time in the artist's studio. She copied some of his loveliest pictures—landscapes smiling, full of repose, as if sketched from the new-born earth ere its fair scenes had received the impress of sin or sorrow—faces which still reflected the light of Heaven, till her own spirit caught something of the purity and peace with which it was conversant, and the little and the selfish faded into indistinctness, and a world of beauty, order, harmony arose before her. Her religious faith taught her to look for God everywhere, and she found Him here. Were her earthly affections less fervent? No—she loved as warmly, but love had acquired for her a new significance. It was not now the strong desire to bind to herself the object that was felt to be essential to her own happiness—at least this was not its sole or even its chief characteristic,—it was a tenderness too deep for utterance, a desire too earnest for speech for the happiness of the objects of her regard. And these objects —how enlarged was their circle! With what a pitying eye did she look from the fair world into which she had found entrance, upon those who were degraded by vice, darkened by ignorance, or oppressed by poverty! Mrs. Maclaurin found her more than ever ready to aid her in her charitable efforts.

We have sketched rapidly and in a few lines the changes which were wrought by months in Mary's spirit, and we will now return to one who, while she had been rising above earth's straitened horizon, was treading a flowery but not thornless path below—to Evelyn Beresford.

CHAPTER VI.

"Her lot is on you—silent tears to weep,
And patient smiles to wear through suff'ring's hour,
And sumless riches, from affection's deep,
To pour on broken reeds,—a wasted shower!
And to make idols and to find them clay,
And to bewail that worship—therefore pray!"

HEMANS.

MANY days passed after the interview in which Euston Hastings had solicited the friendship of Evelyn Beresford, and she met him only in the presence of others, and received from him only those distant civilities which had previously marked their intercourse. That interview became to Evelyn as a dream, yet a dream on which memory loved to linger. The emotions it excited were something apart from her common life—too pure, too refined in their delight for earth's daily food, yet were they not free from doubts—shadows which passed as quickly as they came. It was the mocking tone, the sneer of Euston Hastings, though never addressed to her, which brought these shadows on her soul. When she saw them, the thought "What if that too were mockery!" would flash like lightning through her brain, bringing with it a pang bitter as death; but one glance from those deep, shadowy eyes would chase the pang away.

And where was Everard Irving while another thus swayed the heart which he fondly believed his own? Rarely absent from Evelyn's side, and ever received with kindness and with pleasure, for Evelyn's conscience accused her of no wrong to him. She had measured none with Everard Irving

as a lover, and she was assured he would not desire to interfere with her *friendship* to another.

"To whom are the thoughts which bring at once smiles and blushes consecrated, *ma belle?*"

The question and the voice caused brighter blushes to flit over Evelyn's face as she started from a revery so deep, that the opening of the door had been unheard, to welcome Euston Hastings. Once more they were alone, and again she met the looks which thrilled her heart. Her eyes sank under his, and unable to utter the greeting for which she had risen, she stood before him silent and abashed.

"Not a word of welcome for me," he said, after a moment's enjoyment of her confusion. "I shall grow envious of your lover, if words as well as thoughts are reserved for him."

As Euston Hastings spoke, he had taken Evelyn's hand, and drawing her to a sofa, seated himself beside her.

"Will you not tell me that you are a little glad to see me?" he asked.

Feeling that her silence was becoming awkward, Evelyn assumed a gay smile and repeated his own words, "I am a little glad to see you."

"If you knew how I had manœuvred to escape that prating Frenchwoman, and get here before the time that Estelle told me you had engaged to drive out with Mr. Irving, you would think I deserved that you should be more than a little glad to see me—but you have not answered my first question. Of whom was that happy dream that I dispelled?"

Evelyn answered not, except by a more vivid blush.

"Was it of Mr. Irving?"

Evelyn strove to withdraw her hand and turn away.

"Ah! I see it was—well, I will try not to envy him;" and Euston Hastings released the hand that was struggling

in his grasp. Evelyn had not courage to raise her eyes to his face. But a moment before she had been trying to free her hand, and now she did not remove it—she suffered it to remain where he had left it—she desired nothing so much as that he should take it again. His last words were spoken in a sad tone. Could he be displeased?—had she given him pain? This thought gave her power to speak. Again she would have veiled her feelings under a tone of gayety, but her faltering voice and quivering lip made the effort vain.

"To aid you in your resistance to such a sin as envy, I will acknowledge my thoughts were not of him."

Euston Hastings had drunk in every emotion which mirrored itself in that pure sweet face while Evelyn was silent. His heart was beating quickly, and bending towards her till his lips almost touched her ear, he whispered, "Were they of me?"

Evelyn spoke not, stirred not, scarcely breathed. It was but a second, and the door-bell rang loudly and quickly. She started to her feet, exclaiming, "It is Mr. Irving—I know his ring—what shall I do?—I cannot see him."

"Cannot see him!—and why not?" asked the calm voice of Euston Hastings, who had already risen from his seat and moved away. "Do you fear that Mr. Irving will be displeased because another occupies some of your thoughts, or engages you in conversation for a few brief minutes during his absence? But you are not yet prepared for your drive. Suppose you withdraw to your room, and allow me to tell him you have gone to do so."

"Thank you—I will." And Evelyn advanced to the very door at which Everard was about to enter, but she was checked by Euston Hastings, who, opening the door into the conservatory, said—

"This way, and by the private stairs."

Evelyn obeyed, and scarcely had she disappeared when Everard Irving entered. Euston Hastings was lounging in a rocking-chair.

"I thought Miss Beresford was here," said Mr. Irving, after the first hurried greeting.

"She was when I entered," was the reply; "but she went to her room to prepare, I understood, for a drive with you."

Everard smiled as he looked at his watch, and saw that it wanted yet twenty minutes to the time of their appointment, for he thought she must have been weary of her grave companion and wanted an excuse for retiring, or she would not have required half that time for her preparation. The twenty minutes however passed away without her appearing. Everard became impatient. He rang the bell.

"Does Miss Beresford know that I am here?"

"I thought Miss Beresford was in this room, sir."

"Let her be informed now that I am here, and that the sleigh is at the door."

This message found Evelyn still unprepared for her drive, and when she was cloaked and bonneted, she yet lingered. She shrank with almost invincible repugnance from meeting Everard Irving—most of all from meeting him in the presence of Euston Hastings. The necessity of disguise was to her a new and painful sensation. Free, by the indulgence of her father, from the usual constraints of childhood, she had been free likewise from the usual temptations to concealment. When Everard Irving sought to gain her promise to be his, she had told him, "If I make you this promise, I must tell it to my father before I sleep," and she had told him truly; but now she must wake and sleep with thoughts unspoken, feelings unconfessed. When in their first *tête-à-tête* Euston Hastings had suggested secrecy respecting their new relations, and she had adopted his suggestion, it had

seemed in both but a delicate regard to the feelings of others, an aversion to cause the pain which a possible error might occasion; but Evelyn could no longer "lay this flattering unction to her soul." The wild terror with which she had heard the bell that announced the approach of Everard Irving had revealed to herself, and must have betrayed to Euston Hastings, that she was now conscious of something to be concealed for her own sake. What that something was,—why she should suspect Mr. Irving, gentle and generous as he had ever seemed, of being offended by her friendship for another, a friendship, too, so refined, so sublimated, —why she should even shrink from avowing it to her father, to Mrs. Mabury—these were questions she did not ask herself, or if she did, she could obtain from her heart no intelligible answer.

The snow reflecting back in dazzling brightness an unclouded sun, the bells of many sleighs ringing merrily out on the still though frosty air, and the gay voices of companions,

"Playful as Peris just loosed from their cages,"

who were going, by Mr. Beresford's invitation, to spend a day with Evelyn in her own home—all these promoters of cheerfulness failed to make her cheerful. She laughed, it is true, more loudly, and talked more rapidly than usual; there were times even when a strange joy thrilled her nerves, but the serene, unclouded gladness of her past life was hers no longer. She had tasted of "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," and the gates of Paradise were about to close on her forever. Hitherto existence had been a joy to her—she had been happy without a care for happiness; but henceforth, "the fruit she gathered would be of the trees she planted."

And Euston Hastings—was he wholly indifferent to the

game he was playing? It had been commenced by him in the gay caprice of an idler; but, to his own surprise, he was becoming deeply interested in it. Beginning life with advantages of intellect, fortune, position, surpassed by few, he had yet wanted the gift that would have made all these available to high purposes—the gift of faith—faith in the Holy, whether within man or above him—faith in the Eternal—and all his advantages were consecrated to the earthly and the selfish. He had too little respect for his fellow-men greatly to desire their applause. It was not at the shrine of ambition, therefore, but of pleasure that he prostrated himself. Excitement—the excitement on whose wings the leaden hours of life might be borne rapidly away, this was the object of his eager search. His nature was of too intellectual a cast, his tastes too refined, to permit him to seek it in the grossly sensual; but to awaken the mind and interest the heart of woman, to see the ardent nature yielding to his influence, and the proud spirit striving in vain to escape his sway, these were the triumphs in which he delighted.

In Mrs. Mabury alone Euston Hastings had found his equal in the arts of coquetry, and to her he had devoted himself for the unprecedented period of four years. She had declared that nothing should induce her again to circumscribe her freedom by the bonds of marriage, and from that moment to win her as his wife had been his persevering effort. Mrs. Mabury understood both him and herself too well to yield to his persuasions, and as he despaired of success he wearied of pursuit. Yet habit still attached him to her side, when new circumstances came to give something of the power of novelty to her charms. Never had her versatility of talent and her graceful *abandon* of manner seemed to him so fascinating, as when seen on the sombre groundwork of American society. Mrs.

Mabury, who well understood his tastes, little feared a rival in an American woman—"bound in," as she would have said, "by dull proprieties forever." Least of all did she expect to find one in Evelyn Beresford, whose girlish simplicity of character and manner would, she believed, be considered the extreme of insipidity by one who sought in a companion an antidote to *ennui*. With woman's almost intuitive perception into character, she had seen in Evelyn feelings—

"Fresh as the fountain under ground,
When first 'tis by the lapwing found,"

and an ardent, unquestioning devotion to the objects of her love, which might have won some sympathy from an anchorite; but she did not believe that Euston Hastings would approach sufficiently near to one so unpretending to feel their charm. In forming this opinion Mrs. Mabury had forgotten how often the accidents of life, or those unforeseen circumstances which we call accidents, bring us into unsought positions, and make to us unexpected revelations. Such had been to Euston Hastings and Evelyn the accident of his momentary assumption of the Ivanhoe to her Rowena.

Many had smiled good-humoredly at her evident preference of Everard Irving to all others in the character of her lover, but Euston Hastings had sneered.

"A pretty piece of feminine acting," he said to Mrs. Mabury; "Mr. Irving is its dupe, as every man is of woman at some period of his life. Let another but throw into the personation of her lover enough of nature, and the coquetry will be unveiled."

Mrs. Mabury, with truer knowledge of her sex, shook her head, and Euston Hastings, piqued at her incredulity, had been nothing loth to try the experiment at the call of Madame L'Egaré. We have seen the result. Evelyn had fled from him, Mrs. Mabury had triumphed, and Euston Hastings had said nothing of the one brief moment in which her

eyes had rested on him, and he had read or fancied an impassioned nature slumbering in their depths. Everard Irving's exultation moved his mockery, for he thought that the fear with which Evelyn fled from the scene, was not so much dread of him, as the shrinking of a susceptible nature from the new sensations that his looks and words had awakened. There was just enough of doubt in these indications to give zest to another experiment. That experiment was made, but he was careful now not to alarm. Gentle, unexacting, tender, love wore the mask of friendship, and as such was received without apprehension. To wake that slumbering nature into life, to see that ardent heart yield itself unquestioningly to his sway, was to Euston Hastings a new and exquisite pleasure. Over one so guileless, so confiding, that she accepted without a doubt the name by which he chose to interpret her sensations, no coquetry piqued him to triumph; and as he watched her fluctuating color, saw the trembling of her downcast lids, and the soft smile that played around her lovely lips, somewhat of genuine feeling awoke within him and prompted him to fold her to his bosom as his own, but the feeling was not sufficiently powerful to overcome the resistance offered by the whole current of his being. He would not hazard the observation which frequent private interviews with Evelyn would have drawn on him; but in her presence, even when seemingly most inattentive to her, not a shadow passed over her brow, not an emotion expressed itself in the transparent mirror of her face which he did not read, and well he knew to whom the smiles and blushes of that sweet dream which he had broken were consecrated.

And Evelyn's whole life became now indistinct and aimless as a dream. The new sentiment with which she had been inspired by Euston Hastings, was like the introduction into a piece of music of some inharmonious note from an in-

strument of exquisite sweetness of tone—delightful in itself, it had produced the most painful discord in her heart. Even in her father's arms she felt its influence—it had drawn a veil between their hearts. It had destroyed the charm of her intercourse with Mrs. Mabury. Wherefore this was, Evelyn knew not, perhaps she sought not to know; she only felt that under an earnest look from Mrs. Mabury her cheeks crimsoned and her heart throbbed with undefined fear, and that those *tête-à-têtes*, once so valued, in which Mrs. Mabury had seemed to look into her heart only that she might know how best to please and to delight her, were now avoided. But most of all had this new sentiment disturbed the repose of her relations with Everard Irving. Alone with him, she became silent and depressed; in society, she plunged with reckless gayety into the amusements of the hour, and welcomed attentions which she had hitherto avoided, that she might evade those gentle, quiet cares that mark the lover's devotion. Everard Irving saw and suffered from her change; yet it was of a nature to be felt rather than defined, it was a shadow which darkened his path, but presented nothing tangible to his grasp. Not for a moment was his jealousy excited by any of the flutterers with whom she laughed so gayly or danced and sung so readily, for even a lover's sharpened perception could detect no preference of any one among them, could find no token of the heart's presence in laugh or dance or song. Euston Hastings rarely approached her when he was present, indeed rarely of his own choice did he approach her at all in society; yet neither did he seem to avoid her, and if by accident they were thrown together, his manner was grave though kind, and Evelyn's embarrassment, if observed at all, appeared but girlish diffidence of one with whom persons older and more assured than herself often felt not quite at ease. But a skilful manœuverer, and thoroughly

au fait of Mrs. Mabury's habits and those of her household, Euston Hastings found little difficulty in securing to himself at pleasure a few moments alone with Evelyn. Again and again, in such interviews, did he present to her lip that intoxicating draught which, elevating her above the circle of common life, rendered her forgetful alike of its cares and its obligations. Still his language was that of friendship. He was the friend of her soul, while Everard Irving was recognised as her lover, connected to her by ties less refined, less spiritual than those by which he desired to link his being to hers. More than once had Euston Hastings felt the hand he held grow cold, and seen the heart's sudden pang throw its shadow over Evelyn's face, at these allusions to her engagement with another. Such emotion was costly incense offered at his shrine, which for one moment he would enjoy with sensations of the most exquisite delight, and then obliterate its very memory by some look, or movement, or whispered word, bearing within it the very heart of love. But there were times in his absence when Evelyn could recall only the faint image of that look or movement, the fainter echo of that word, when her reason cast off their spell and showed her an abyss opening at her feet. But though she shrank back appalled from the vision, it was but a moment, and the next, closing her eyes to all danger, she was rushing forward on the same path, yielding unresistingly to her destiny.

Destiny! poor blind, with which man hoodwinks his own reason. In the physical world we adore, we joyfully avail ourselves of those fixed laws which unerring Wisdom and unwavering Love have established. The same Wisdom and the same Love have established laws as certain in the moral world; our passions rise up in opposition to them, we choose rather to suffer their penalty than to obey them, and this we call yielding to our destiny. Yet true it is that we

are social beings, and weave not alone the tissue of our lives; that the threads of other men's fortunes are often intertwined with ours; and that circumstances over which we had no control—the natures we inherit, our early nurture, a thousand nameless considerations—increase or diminish, in an almost incalculable degree, the difficulties attending our conformity to law, whether moral or physical. But it is only by a strange perversion that these truths can lead us to a self-indulgent passiveness. Extending the sphere of our responsibility, increasing the difficulties of our progress—their legitimate result would be more vigorous and persevering effort.

Evelyn Beresford inherited a nature full of all sweet and endearing qualities. Her temper was gentle, her affections ardent, and surrounded from infancy by the pure and tender influences of a father's love, she had walked blamelessly and joyously along her sunlit path. Now, darkness was around her, and the very impulses which had hitherto led her in safety, were tempting her into dangerous ways. With what weapons had she been furnished for their resistance?

To please the objects of her affection; to sacrifice herself to them; to make her life a ministry of love, demanding only love as its repayment—these were her principles of action. How often are they the only principles with which woman is sent forth to her combat with the powers of earth! The distinction made by Milton between our first parents, seems to be recognised as just by their descendants. Man is taught to draw his motives from above, from the Heavenly—to live "for God only;" while from her very cradle woman's heart is linked to earth as the source of her motives, hopes, rewards, and if she lives for God, it is "for God in" some earthly object.

While such important changes were occurring in Evelyn's inner life, the outward was all serenity. Month after month

had glided by, and Mrs. Mabury's persuasions, seconded by what Mr. Beresford believed the unspoken wishes of Evelyn, had still induced him to delay the period of her return home. It was now the middle of March; he had declared himself unable to do without her longer, and the day was appointed for her return. That day had been announced in the presence of Euston Hastings, yet no word or even glance evinced his interest in it. Day by day Evelyn hoped, and hoped in vain, that he would break this strange silence. The last day but one had arrived, and through its lingering hours she looked and listened for him with nervous anxiety. He came not; and when she descended to the parlor in the evening, prepared to accompany Mrs. Mabury to a gay party, her cheek was pale, her eyes dim, and her movements languid. Euston Hastings was there, and never in her most brilliant moments had she interested him so deeply, for in her altered appearance he recognised his own power. There was no time now for speech even had he desired it, but in handing Evelyn into the carriage, his lingering pressure of her hand awoke the hope which was well-nigh dead within her;—so slowly and reluctantly does the heart relinquish its faith in the truth of that which it earnestly desires. They were late, and the rooms were already filled.

"Stay," said Mrs. Mabury, as Euston Hastings offered her his arm, "three in a line will never make their way through such a crowd. Take charge of Miss Beresford, and I will find an escort among those old gentlemen before us."

Evelyn's hand rested on the arm of Euston Hastings, and was pressed gently to his side, while a single glance told his pleasure in the arrangement, and noted the flushing of her cheek and the sudden sparkle of her eye. It was but a moment. Evelyn's nerves were yet thrilling beneath that gentle pressure, when Mrs. Mabury exclaimed, "Here comes Mr. Irving—you must relinquish Miss Beresford to him."

Everard, who had been hesitating whether he should offer the escort that had been so coldly accepted of late, now approached. With a few courteous words to him, and a sigh nicely modulated for Evelyn's ear alone, Euston Hastings resigned his place, and they entered the room. Dancing had already commenced.

"Will you join the cotillion which is just forming?" asked Everard Irving of Evelyn, after their salutation to their hostess had been made.

Her manner was more than cold,—he almost thought it sullen as she replied, "I do not think I shall dance this evening—certainly not in this set; but do not let me detain you: I will join Mrs. Mabury, if you please." And advancing towards that lady, she withdrew her arm from Everard's and passed it through hers.

Mrs. Mabury turned to her with evident surprise, asking, "Do you not dance?"

Everard lingered for her answer, but without glancing towards him she replied, "No," and he darted off, and was soon among the dancers, though with a spirit little accordant with the gay scene.

Relieved from Everard Irving's presence, the shadow passed from Evelyn's brow and the coldness from her manner. Through the whole of that day her mind had been occupied with the one desire of seeing Euston Hastings, of hearing from him some of those tender words which make a friend's farewell not all sorrowful, of receiving some promise which should shed the light of hope over the future. Disappointment, doubt had converted this desire into a passionate longing; and at the moment in which accident seemed to render its partial fulfilment possible, Everard Irving's approach had blasted her hopes, and irrational as it may seem, that approach was resented as an injury, and added active displeasure to the dissatisfaction which his

presence had long caused her. Thus had one false sentiment, unresisted by principle, overborne the feeble barrier of opposing impulses, and obscured the moral perceptions of Evelyn. But her nature was too gentle to entertain angry emotion long, and the object of her displeasure being removed, her accustomed serenity soon returned. Some of her young acquaintances approached, admirers gathered around them, and soon she stood the centre of a joyous circle; and her gay tones and light laugh, musical as they were, rang painfully on Everard's ear as the movements of the dance brought him in her neighborhood, increasing the irritation which her manner had already caused.

There was a pause in the music, and some of the dancers retired from the floor. Mr Clayton, a young gentleman whose agreeable manners and sprightly conversation made him a general favorite, invited Evelyn to dance.

"I do not know that I ought," she said, hesitatingly. "Mr. Irving asked me to dance when we first entered, and I declined."

"I cannot relinquish the pleasure of dancing with you for so slight a cause. I will bring Mr. Irving, and I am sure he will grant you absolution for no more severe penance than dancing with him when you have fulfilled your engagement with me."

Mr. Clayton would have gone to Everard, but Evelyn stopped him. To appeal to him was an act of deference which she felt just then little disposed to pay. "Stay, Mr. Clayton," she exclaimed, "you need not trouble yourself—I only said I did not think I should dance."

"Oh! if that was all, you are completely exonerated," said Mr. Clayton, as he led her out. "You have been in the room for half an hour at least, and to hold the same opinion for that time would be a masculine assumption that would greatly detract from your charms."

A playful conversation followed, which for a few minutes withdrew Evelyn's observation from the movements around her. It ceased, and looking up, she saw, immediately before her, Everard Irving. His eyes were fixed steadfastly upon her, and as her face flushed beneath his gaze, a smile of angry disdain curled his lip. Again and again, while seeming to listen to the gay observations of her partner, Evelyn's eyes were turned involuntarily, as if by some strange fascination, to that haughty brow, and still they met that fixed and angry gaze. Could this be the gentle and playful Everard Irving, whose very indulgence and submission to her caprices had prevented his gaining from her that veneration which is with woman an essential element of love? With a sensation of dread Evelyn felt rather than saw that he was approaching her. But when he spoke, his tones were calm, and there seemed little to excite apprehension in his words.

"Permit me," said he, "to congratulate you on your change of resolution, Miss Beresford. I understood you would not dance this evening."

Rallying her spirits, Evelyn answered hurriedly, "I said I did not *think* I should. It is a woman's privilege, you know, to change her mind."

"A very valuable privilege sometimes—I hope you do not suspect me of any desire to interfere with your exercise of it. On the contrary, I advise you to guard it well—you may find more important occasions for its use than the present."

Evelyn's heart swelled indignantly, but painful, humiliating consciousness checked her speech and dyed her cheeks with blushes. Had she known that the jealousy which had given such unusual severity to Everard had found its object in Mr. Clayton, she might have been more bold in repelling his attack.

Mr. Clayton, believing with the rest of the world in her attachment and engagement to Everard, and supposing his anger to have been solely excited by her declining to dance with him and accepting the invitation of another, was indignant at his harshness, and pretending to whisper, but really meaning his words more for Everard's ear than hers, said, "Pray, Miss Beresford, take Mr. Irving's advice, and permit me to profit by the exercise of your sex's privilege on those more important occasions, as I do on this."

Everard Irving's eyes flashed in angry inquiry on the speaker, and were met by a countenance of careless defiance; but the music recommenced, and reminded by it how unfit were both the time and the place for the prosecution of a quarrel, he returned to his place.

Miss Beresford's flirtation and Mr. Irving's anger were the favorite topics of the evening; and when Mr. Clayton, at the breaking up of the party, proffered those attentions to Clara Wendall which it had long been one of his chief pleasures to pay and of hers to receive, they were rejected with a proud, cold look that would have sent him from her side, had he not noticed that her face was pale, and that the hand with which she was tying her bonnet trembled so as to render the task well-nigh impossible.

"What is the matter, Clara?" he whispered.

A single glance of keen reproach was her only direct reply, but turning from the look of surprise with which he met her eye, she said, "You are remiss, Mr. Clayton, Miss Beresford waits for her shawl," and her lover felt that the mystery was explained.

"Would you advise me," he asked, with a lightened heart, "to run the risk a second time in the same evening of a pistol-shot from Mr. Irving, with little prospect of being rewarded for my boldness by any gratitude from Miss Beresford?"

"Well, if no one else will employ you, I suppose I must, so take charge of that bouquet for me."

But it was not only Clara Wendall's heart which those light words and his lighter tone had set at rest. Everard Irving had heard enough of them, as he stood for a moment pressed by a crowd against the doorway of the ladies' dressing-room, to satisfy him that his jealousy of Mr. Clayton was unfounded; and his generous nature, convicted of injustice in one respect, was ready to take blame to itself in all—at least, to feel that Evelyn's caprice was more pardonable than his harshness. Indignation gave place to sorrow, and he would even then have sought her forgiveness could he have made his way to her, but before it was possible to do so he saw her led to her carriage by Euston Hastings.

"Why, Eva, what an arrant coquette you have become!" exclaimed Mrs. Mabury, when they met at breakfast the next morning. "Your flirtation with Mr. Clayton was quite the talk last evening; but you must play your game cautiously, *ma belle*, or you will have him and Mr. Irving handling pistols and daggers instead of only looking them as they did last night."

"I am quite innocent of any flirtation," said Evelyn, striving to speak carelessly, "and if I were guilty I do not see how that could furnish the gentlemen you name with a reason for handling, or even for looking pistols and daggers."

"Reason! an angry man rarely waits for that, and a lover who sees himself slighted for another seldom fails to find or make a good excuse for challenging his rival; but you need not turn so pale, Eva, lovers' quarrels have not generally a very fatal termination, and before the morning is past yours and Mr. Irving's will, I dare say, be brought to a conclusion without either pistol or dagger."

Mrs. Mabury's raillery did not tend to restore Evelyn's equanimity. She smiled but faintly, and was so silent and

seemingly abstracted, that Mrs Mabury at last exclaimed, "What is the matter, Eva? Are you thinking how you shall receive Mr. Irving and make the *amende* to him? Shall I give you a lesson in the art of getting skilfully out of a fracas?"

"If you please, it may serve me at some future time."

"Different modes must be adopted with different characters, but that which I consider most generally successful, is the Roman mode of warfare, carrying the war into the enemy's country. Woman's wits are like the light-horse of an army, which go flying hither and thither at a moment's warning—man's are the heavy infantry, which require time to form themselves and prepare for an assault; and I like nothing so well as dashing in among them when they are least expecting an attack, throwing them into confusion and winning the victory before they can strike a blow."

"But do you always win the victory?" asked Evelyn, endeavoring to seem amused.

"Oh, no! there are some natures, though very few, which stand such assaults unmoved; these may be melted by your tears, or, if you find that too difficult, you must play *La Capricieuse* so gracefully as to make them in love with your tyranny—sporting with their complaints, laughing at their remonstrances, and mimicking their frowns. But, hist! here comes one of the lordly race, and we must not let them into our tactics."

The new comer was Mr. Beresford.

"Not come for Evelyn already," exclaimed Mrs. Mabury as he entered.

"No, I hope to persuade you to accompany Evelyn and spend her first day at home with her, and if you do so, I will come for her at any hour you shall appoint; but now I want your opinion of my new carriage," and Mr. Beresford led Mrs. Mabury to the window. The carriage received her

unqualified approval, and elicited exclamations of delight from Evelyn.

"I am glad you like it, Eva, for it is yours; and I am now in search of a pair of horses for you. The old grays suit the old carriage and an old man well enough, but you will want a gayer-looking pair, though they must be gentle too."

"If you are going to purchase horses, Mr. Beresford, you must take Mr. Hastings with you; a few minutes' acquaintance is sufficient to make him *au fait* of their merits and demerits," said Mrs. Mabury.

"Ah! I shall certainly then endeavor to obtain his opinion of a pair that were offered me yesterday; but where shall I find him at this hour?"

"Oh! at Bunker's. He is doubtless still playing the coquette between his coffee and the morning paper."

"Then I will call there at once—I hope he will make one of our party to-day. By-the-by, you have not told me at what hour I shall call for you."

"I have not yet said that I would go 'said Mrs. Mabury with a smile.

"But you have not refused."

"And you *will* not refuse," added Evelyn pleadingly.

"I *can* not refuse any thing that you ask so earnestly Eva."

Evelyn colored at the thought of the mingled motives which induced her earnestness, while Mr. Beresford said smilingly to her, "Well, Eva, should Mr. Irving call while I am away, try if you are as irresistible with him; I will ensure the company of Mr. Hastings by laying Mrs. Mabury's commands on him, and we will be here—at what hour?" appealing again to Mrs. Mabury.

"At any hour you please I will be ready for you," was her reply.

"Eleven o'clock," said Mr. Beresford, looking at his watch; "as Mr. Hastings is so rapid in his judgment, and I intend to be wholly governed by him, you may expect us at twelve."

With a nervous impatience, which arose almost as much from her fear of seeing Everard Irving as from her hope that Euston Hastings would accompany her father, Evelyn was soon seated at a window overlooking the street, seemingly occupied with the morning paper, but in reality watching for the carriage which would bring the one and convey her to a greater distance from the other. She was not quite alone, for on a sofa in the same room lounged Mrs. Mabury with a book.

Evelyn's watch had just informed her that it yet wanted a few minutes to the hour appointed by her father, when her attentive ear caught the sound of wheels rattling violently over the pavement. The next instant a frightful vision flashed before her eyes. A pair of large and powerful-looking chesnut horses were dashing furiously by with the carriage she had so lately admired. Rapidly as it was borne along, Evelyn not only saw her father, whose head was uncovered and his face turned towards her, but ascertained also that there was another with him. The face of the other was concealed by his hat, and by his position as he stooped forward, apparently in a desperate effort to recover the reins, which had been caught in some part of the foot-board. But what need had she to look upon his face —did she not know but too well who was to be the companion of her father?

A faint cry from Evelyn and her hurried movement, as she rose and threw up the sash beside her, attracted Mrs. Mabury's attention, but to her questioning Evelyn returned no answer—she was leaning far out of the window, looking,

not at the carriage, for that was already out of sight, but at the excited crowd that gathered in its wake.

"What is the matter, John?" exclaimed Mrs. Mabury, as, approaching the window with awakened curiosity, she saw her footman standing beneath it.

With a hesitating glance at Evelyn, the man went to the farther window, and there Mrs. Mabury received his intelligence.

"Was there any one with Mr. Beresford?" she asked quickly, as John informed her that he had seen that gentleman in the carriage.

Her face grew paler, and she pressed her lips tightly together, as John answered—"Yes, ma'am."

"There goes a man with Mr. Beresford's cap—I am sure it is Mr. Beresford's—ask him to step here, John; perhaps we may learn something from him."

Evelyn, too, had recognised the cap, and listened anxiously to the question—"My good man, where did you get that cap?"—and to his reply.

"I picked it up in the street, for I was standin' by when it fell from off the gentleman's head, and now I'm a followin' to give it to him; but I'm a thinkin' I might save myself the trouble, for I hearn jist now that the gentlemen was both pitched out,—and if that's the case, they be'n't likely to want any cap but the undertaker's."

"Hush—hush!" said Mrs. Mabury, shrinking herself from such a terrible announcement, and dreading yet more its effect on Evelyn.

The caution came too late. All had been said and heard. Evelyn had sunk back upon her chair, and as Mrs. Mabury drew near to her with expressions of hope, which her white and trembling lips belied, she saw that she had fainted.

"Loose her clothes, and lay her on the sofa," she said to

her own woman and Evelyn's, whom John had sent to her; "but do nothing more,—she will revive but too soon, if what we dread has happened."

Evelyn lay long thus senseless. In the first bewildered moments of returning consciousness, she thought there were several voices whispering around her; yet, when she opened her eyes, only Mrs. Mabury was bending over her couch. She met her glance with a smile, but the traces of agitation were still visible upon her face, and with a sudden rush of memory Evelyn exclaimed—"My father!"

"His life is safe, dear Evelyn, quite safe,—though he is not unhurt!"

"And he—oh! tell me—"

She spoke hurriedly, and rising on her elbow, glanced wildly around. The next instant she sank back on her pillows, covered with smiles and blushes. She had seen Euston Hastings, who said gently—

"Your friend is unhurt, Miss Beresford. Come, Mr. Irving, let Miss Beresford see that you have received no injury."

Everard Irving, who had only withdrawn from the fear of alarming her, was now at her side—every doubt removed, every jealous apprehension silenced, and silenced, he believed, forever. He knew not that another had been supposed the sharer of Mr. Beresford's danger, and none who heard her last thrilling appeal to Mrs. Mabury, could doubt that on the safety of him respecting whom she asked, her happiness, perhaps her very life, depended. Even now, she turned away the face he longed to look upon, she strove to withdraw the hand which he fondly clasped, and he called it embarrassment, timidity, any thing rather than coldness.

But not so was it with Mrs. Mabury. She knew whom Evelyn had believed in danger. Versed in every varying

tone and look of Euston Hastings, she felt that there was intentional ambiguity in his address to Evelyn.

Mrs. Mabury was too proud to be suspicious, and now, doubt and conviction came together; for convinced she was that Evelyn Beresford, the affianced of Everard Irving, on whom he was even now lavishing every demonstration of tenderness, had given her heart to Euston Hastings, and equally convinced that she had not given it unsought. She turned to look on Euston Hastings. His eyes were fixed upon her, and one glance of keen inquiry told him her doubt,—a proud smile, a haughtier erection of her queenly head, conveyed to him her conviction. The next moment she was attending to Evelyn, whose thoughts had already returned to her father, and who was now demanding to be led to him.

"A carriage waits, and as soon as you are ready we will go," said Everard Irving. "He sent me for you, dear Evelyn, and I am impatient to return to him."

Evelyn glanced at her dress, and Mrs. Mabury said, "We must convert this into your dressing-room, Evelyn. Mr. Irving, if you will go into the next room, I will call you as soon as Miss Beresford is prepared. Mr. Hastings—"

"You need not trouble yourself about me, Estelle. I will make my adieu to Miss Beresford, and amuse myself with a book in your boudoir till you are disengaged."

Mrs. Mabury's brow flushed as Euston Hastings pronounced her name; but with a silent bow she suffered him to go.

Evelyn's anxiety made her movements rapid, and Everard Irving was soon summoned to accompany her. Mrs. Mabury supported her to the carriage, proffered her aid to her in any way or at any time, received Everard Irving's promise to bring her intelligence of Mr. Beresford and

Evelyn in the afternoon, and, as the carriage drove away, turned to the room in which Euston Hastings awaited her.

A spectator might have detected a slight tinge of color on Euston Hastings' usually pallid brow, and might have seen that, for a single instant, his looks were turned on the ground as they met her calm, proud eye. Making an effort to overcome these unusual sensations, as Mrs. Mabury seated herself on the couch, he flung himself into the luxurious chair we have once before described at her side, and said—"Your guests have left you."

A simple affirmative from Mrs. Mabury was succeeded by some minutes of silence, each desiring that the other should lead the way to that subject which filled the hearts of both. Mrs. Mabury at length said, "I thought from your proposal to await me here, that you had something to say to me."

"It was rather to ask what you had to say to me. Your looks were full of a meaning which required some explanation."

"What did they seem to you to express?"

"Inquiry."

"You read well; and you are probably aware of what I intended to inquire,—but, since it seems an embarrassing subject to you, I will explain myself more fully. As Miss Beresford's temporary guardian, and one deeply interested in her happiness, I inquire what are your designs in relation to her."

"Deeply interested in Miss Beresford's happiness!—and have you no other interest, Estelle?"

Euston Hastings had recovered from his temporary embarrassment, and again his dark eyes were fixed on Mrs. Mabury, and his deep, earnest tones thrilled her heart as, after a moment's pause, he continued, "Rejected as the

husband, scarce tolerated as the lover, am I now to find myself discarded as the friend?"

"I have expressed no such intention," said Mrs. Mabury, calmly, though her voice was slightly tremulous; "as your friend, I had a right to expect your confidence—it has been withheld, and you know me too well to believe that I would seek it, did not my duty to Miss Beresford constrain me."

"My confidence has ever been yours unsought, and so it would have been now,—but in truth, Estelle, I have only this morning become conscious that I have any thing to confide. On my honor I have never spoken of love to this little girl, though I have taken some interest in her, and evinced it as a friend,—and now that this morning's developments seem to make some designs respecting her necessary, I am exceedingly puzzled to decide what they shall be."

He paused for a moment, and his voice assumed a deeper tone as he added—

"Estelle! you are the only being to whom my heart has ever given an unconstrained and entire devotion—to your power only have I ever submitted. At your will, I subdued the most passionate love into the tenderest and most unreserved friendship, and now, once more, I place my destiny at your disposal—decide for me. I have not, I repeat, spoken of love to Evelyn Beresford,—yet the events of the morning prove that I have awakened a sentiment which makes her happiness dependent on me. My interest in her is sincere, and I feel compelled by that, and by my sense of honor, to marry her, or to withdraw from her sphere. Of you I ask—Which shall I do—shall I leave America, bid adieu for life to her and to you; or shall I make her my wife, and still indulge myself in the society of my dearest and truest friend?"

"Could you not withdraw from Evelyn without leaving America?"

"New York is America to me, and I do not see how, remaining so near her, I could withdraw from all association with her, without inflicting on her incessant mortifications and all the lingering tortures of suspense. To go abroad would cost me little, Estelle, if I might hope for your society; but I cannot be so selfish as to ask from you the sacrifice which I know it would cost you to leave your property here in its present state."

"And Evelyn—would you marry her without love? Do you hope thus to make her happy?"

"I do not love her as I could have loved you, my friend; but, as I have told you, she interests me, she pleases me, I can give her all which her less capacious soul needs for happiness; but you, Estelle, you must ever be my first object, and if my marriage with another will give you pain—"

"Give me pain!" hurriedly exclaimed Mrs. Mabury, "impossible—it can give me only pleasure if you love her—and she is very beautiful."

These last words were pronounced slowly, as if reflection had presented Evelyn's beauty as a possible basis for love. Piqued, less by this than by Mrs. Mabury's avowal of pleasure in his marriage, Euston Hastings replied, "There is that about her, Estelle, which charms me more than her beauty—she is capable of the most passionate devotion."

"Passionate devotion! will that charm always, Euston?" asked Mrs. Mabury, with a sadness composed of regret for herself and foreboding for Evelyn.

"Charm always! Does champagne sparkle forever?"

"And when the charm is no more, when the champagne has ceased to sparkle, what will become of Evelyn?"

"It is time enough to ask that question when the occasion arrives; you know it is my principle not to take trouble for

a future that may never arrive. Besides, with a marriage on hand, for I consider it decided since it will give you pleasure, I have enough in the present to engross my thoughts."

"As mine are not equally absorbed, and as your acquaintance with this young girl was formed through me, you will excuse me for saying that there must be no disguise with her—your religious sentiments, your views of marriage, all must be made known to her."

"They shall be—if you doubt it, make them known to her yourself; but you need not fear, for it will be my chief delight to see her lay down, one by one, the superstitions of her childhood at my feet. Be assured she is one to exclaim,

'Thou for my sake at Alla's shrine,
And I at any God's, for thine.'"

"And how will you dispose of Mr. Irving's claims?" asked Mrs. Mabury carelessly.

"That is not a question for my consideration. I cannot indeed be supposed to be acquainted with his claims, there being no avowed engagement. Should Mr. Irving complain of any of my actions," he added haughtily, "he will find me ready to defend them. Shall you see Evelyn to-day?"

"No, not until to-morrow."

"I will go with you then; but you look fatigued, and I must leave you to rest after a morning of such excitement—I shall return to dinner—shall I bring Monsieur and Madame L'Egaré with me?"

Euston Hastings was already at the door when he asked this question. As Mrs. Mabury answered, "Yes," he kissed his hand and disappeared. Mrs. Mabury's eyes were fixed on the door through which he had passed, till the heavy sound of the outer door closing after him gave notice that he had left the house. As this sound fell on her ear the

pent-up agony burst forth, and clasping her hands together she exclaimed, "Oh God! that I could die," and sank upon the couch burying her head in its cushions.

Her nature was as passionate as proud, and Euston Hastings had awakened its utmost intensity of feeling and gratified its highest ambition. She had made his heart her study, and had tamed down her wild impulses and restrained the expression of her "passionate devotion," because she foresaw that for him, sooner than for most men, the champagne would cease to sparkle. Because she would not relinquish for an empty title all that gave the title value, or change the devoted lover for the cold and careless husband, she had refused to become the wife of Euston Hastings; yet now, that another was to be linked to him as his other self, that she was to live with him and for him, to be the sharer of his home, and thus to make to herself an identity of interests and of feelings with him, were thoughts that stung her heart like serpents, and from which she could not escape even for a moment. She would have hated Evelyn, had not the conviction that she was not loved, and a consequent foreboding of coming sorrow for her, softened her feelings into pity. When the first paroxysm of her agony was passed, her pride awoke in its strength, and she felt that—

> "——— With the shaft in her bosom borne,
> She must hide the wound in her fear of scorn."

And never had Euston Hastings seen Mrs. Mabury so brilliant as at that day's dinner and at Mrs. B—'s soirée, which they attended together in the evening.

"You are surely a *Parisienne*," said Monsieur L'Egaré to her, "for never an American was so sparkling."

"Nay, am I not an Italian?" she asked, with an arch smile, as moving to her harp she sang, to a low, touching accompaniment, a stanza in that language.

"You are what you will, and you make of us what you will," he exclaimed with enthusiasm.

She shook her head at this, and for an instant Euston Hastings thought that he detected a slight quivering of her lip and a moisture veiling her eyes, but when he looked more closely they were gone.

CHAPTER VII.

——— "Earth were too like Heaven
If length of life to love were given."

LANDON.

"EVELYN, dear Evelyn, let me tell you how I hate myself for my irritability yesterday evening; I can never mistake you again, and you will forgive me now, will you not, Evelyn?" pleaded Everard Irving, as he found himself alone with Evelyn.

"I have nothing to forgive, Mr. Irving," said Evelyn, with a tremulous voice; "but tell me of my father, I can think of nothing else just now—where is he?"

"At a country-house just beyond the city."

"How did you escape? When I think of those maddened horses rushing by me, it seems a miracle—pray tell me all about it."

"I was fortunately able to recover the reins which the first sudden movement of the horses had pulled from your father's hand. Master of these, I could guide them as I pleased, and determined to let them run till they had exhausted themselves. I was anxious, however, to get out of Broadway, where there was constant danger of collision with other carriages. I turned accordingly into a newly-opened street in the upper part of the city, determining to pursue the first road we should reach leading into the country. Before we found such a road, we approached a barricade thrown across the street by the workmen, at a spot where seemingly insurmountable obstacles presented them-

selves on either side. Thus hemmed in, and believing the horses would leap the barrier, your father jumped from the back of the carriage and I followed his example. It was well we did, for, kicking themselves free from most of the carriage, the horses sprang over all obstacles with the remainder, and were out of sight before I had time to think of them."

"And my father—was he much hurt?"

"He had fallen, and was stunned and bruised—do not be alarmed, dear Eva, his injuries may be painful, but I am sure they are not dangerous. He had quite recovered his speech and his senses before I left him, and I sent Dr. Huntly to him before I came for you."

"How did you remove him?"

"The country-seat of which I spoke is quite near the scene of our disaster. The ladies who inhabit it sent their man-servant to our assistance, I called some laborers from a neighboring field, and together we raised him and carried him to the house. He was very kindly received, and I left him in bed, as comfortably lodged as possible."

Evelyn now found herself in the unpaved street of which Everard Irving had spoken. It was Fourth-street, which twenty-five years ago still preserved a rural appearance; country-seats with their gardens, and even farmhouses with their surrounding patches of Indian corn, rye, and potatoes, presenting themselves here and there among the high, narrow, red-brick houses with small yards, that marked the advance of the city and the increasing value of the ground. The place to which Mr. Beresford had been taken, was not on the street, but stood a little north of it, on a slight eminence which gave it the advantage of an unobstructed view of the Hudson river, distant about a quarter of a mile in a direct line. The house was large, built of wood, and surrounded by a piazza. Large elms lifted their now leafless branches

around the house, but what had probably been in other days the flower-garden and shrubbery was devoted to the culture of vegetables and the smaller kinds of fruit for the New York market—a change which gave evidence of the decaying fortunes of its inhabitants. Perhaps some association of this kind with the scene on which she had been looking, caused Evelyn to express her reluctance to intrude on the hospitalities of strangers for so long a time as her father's injuries might prevent his removal.

"Dr. Huntly is well acquainted with them, Evelyn, and says that having lost a large part of their income, they have been accustomed for some years past to take a few friends as boarders during the summer season, and he doubts not that he can make the same arrangement with them for your father and yourself."

Evelyn was met on the piazza by a lady in mourning whom Everard named as Mrs. Caldwell, and on entering the parlor she was introduced by her to her mother, Mrs. Frazer, whose reception of her was at once dignified and kind. The air of all around and within the house, as well as the manners of its inmates, bore the stamp of better days. There was a striking contrast between the dark mahogany tables and sideboard with their richly-carved feet, the old-fashioned but handsome piano and sofa, and the coarse carpet, the purchase of a later day, which covered the floor. Not less strikingly dissimilar were the simple and worn garments of Mrs. Frazer and her daughter, and the gentle breeding manifest in their every movement. Evelyn was too much agitated to mark any mere externals, but she felt the influence of those well-modulated tones and quiet courtesies that mark the lady.

"Your room has been already prepared for you, Miss Beresford," said Mrs. Caldwell, "and at the request of your friend Dr. Huntly, a fire has been lighted there, but it has

not had time to become warm yet. Will you not sit with us till you can be admitted to your father's apartment?"

Evelyn readily assented, and leaving her with her kind hostesses, Everard went to Mr. Beresford's room to announce her arrival. He found there both Dr. Huntly and the celebrated surgeon Dr. M——, who had accompanied him.

"You are just in time, Mr. Irving," said Dr. Huntly. "I have sent for Mr. Beresford's man, but till he arrives I must constitute you head nurse. The orders are easily comprehended. The main thing is to keep all around Mr. Beresford quiet—no talking—no excitement. I am going to impress the same thing on Miss Beresford, before I send her in."

Everard followed the medical gentlemen to the door. To his looks rather than his words Dr. Huntly replied, "Two ribs broken besides that cut on the head, but no danger except from fever;—every thing depends on quiet."

When Evelyn entered, Everard saw at a glance that the same lesson had been impressed on her. She was pale with apprehension; but when he would have started forward to support her, she motioned him back. and advanced gently to the side of the bed. Believing her father asleep, she stood gazing silently upon him, with large tears gathering in her downcast eyes.

"Your father does not sleep, Evelyn," said Everard Irving, gently.

Mr. Beresford heard him, and opening his eyes, fixed them on Evelyn with an expression so tender, that her forced composure was wholly overcome, and falling on her knees beside the bed, she dropped her head upon the hand which her father had extended to her and sobbed aloud.

"My precious child!" exclaimed Mr. Beresford, with a quivering lip, "God has been very good to us this day, and next to him you must thank our friend Everard."

Evelyn looked gratefully up to Everard, and held out her hand to him, for at that moment all but her father was forgotten. He pressed her hand to his lips, and continued to hold it while he assisted her to rise, saying, "Your thanks, dear friend, are very dear to me, but they must not make me forget Dr. Huntly's instructions, which were to keep Mr. Beresford free from all excitement. So Evelyn," he added, with playful positiveness, "you must compose yourself, or in virtue of my office as head nurse, I shall turn you out."

Evelyn tried to smile, as seating herself beside the bed she took her father's hand, and said gently, "Sleep now, dear father, and I will watch you."

"I cannot sleep yet, my child—I have something to say to you first. Do not look so disturbed, Everard; I am taking the right way to rest, by removing my only subject of anxiety. Nay, if you shake your head, I must try bribing you. They say every man has his price—what think you of Evelyn as yours? Ah! you are won, I see."

Turning to Evelyn, his countenance became serious, his tones earnest, as he continued—"When I opposed your immediate marriage, my Eva, it was because I thought I could make you happier at home than any husband could do—because I estimated, perhaps too largely, the responsibilities and cares of a wife; but to-day has brought other thoughts, and I desire nothing more earnestly than to see you married this hour, if it were possible."

"Oh father! hush, hush—you speak wildly—your head is disturbed."

"No—no, my child; I am quite calm, except when I think of leaving you a desolate and unconnected orphan. This thought made my moments of danger moments of agony to-day, and now—I would not alarm you, Evelyn—Dr. Huntly says I am in no danger,—I am not, I trust, in any, yet it may be otherwise,—at any rate, I cannot have that

perfect quietness of mind which he thinks necessary to my recovery, till I have seen you taken to the heart of one in whom I can confide as your life-long protector and friend, one generous and brave as our Everard has proved himself to-day. But, my child, why do you turn so pale, and look so wildly?—I repeat to you, I am not in any danger. Speak to her, Everard."

Everard had heard Mr. Beresford's words with a thrill of delight which sent a sudden flush to his brow, but when he looked for sympathy to Evelyn, she was pale as marble. As her father proceeded, her lips parted, and moved as if in the vain attempt to speak, and her eyes became wild with an expression of terror. He spoke soothingly to her, and would have taken her hand, but she recoiled from him with a quick shudder.

"What is the matter with her, Everard?" asked Mr. Beresford, in great alarm.

"Nothing, sir—nothing serious," said Everard, while his looks and manner belied his words. "Your words have alarmed her for you—pray do not allude to any thing that can agitate her at present; she has suffered too much already to-day, and be assured no ceremony could make the tie between us more sacred to me. I will be her life-long protector and friend, so help me Heaven!" and he pressed Mr. Beresford's hand.

"Thank you, Everard—I will try to be satisfied; but during those moments when I expected instant death to-day, her lonely position was my bitterest thought. A friend is much, but a husband—I wish yet it might be."

"Do not speak of it, sir, just now—she is recovering."

While speaking to Mr. Beresford, Everard had fanned Evelyn, held a glass of water to her lips, and sprinkled some in her face. At this last application, with a quick, deep sob

she turned her eyes on her father, and dropping her head on the pillows beside him, burst into tears.

"Poor child!" exclaimed Mr. Beresford, "I did not mean to agitate you thus."

"Evelyn," said Everard, gently, "calm yourself for your father's sake and mine. Dismiss every agitating thought from your mind, and be assured that the greatest of all bribes shall not tempt me to sanction any thing which can cost you a tear. You know that no ceremony is needed to secure to you my entire devotion. Is it not so, dear Evelyn?"

"You are very kind," murmured Evelyn, without raising her head.

"Then reward me for my kindness, if you think it such, by allowing me to support you to your room; you need repose after all you have suffered, and I will make a better nurse to your father just now than you will."

Mr. Beresford added his persuasions to Everard's, and when Evelyn found that her room opened upon her father's, and that a slight call could be heard from the one to the other, she no longer hesitated to comply with their wishes. She would have declined Everard's support, but her father exclaimed, "Fye, Evelyn! if I have vexed you, do not resent it on Everard."

"Dear father! you could not vex me," she replied, and gave her hand to Everard; but she was more exhausted than she felt herself to be till she attempted to stand, and Everard was compelled to carry, rather than lead her, not only to her room, but within it. Lifting her gently in his arms, he laid her on the bed, and bending over her for a moment, said—

"You have cured me of all my jealous doubts, dear Eva. I will wait your own time for this dear hand, and wait patiently too, if you are not very unreasonable; so think no more of what your father said—only think of his safety and

my happiness, and let me see you with your own bright smile before I go back to the city this evening."

As the door closed upon him, Evelyn wrung her hands wildly, and uttered that question which seems the last appeal of suffering, feeble humanity to all above—within—around,—"What shall I do?"

The events of this day had rent asunder the veil which hid from Evelyn's view her heart's inmost sanctuary, and she could no longer doubt whose image was enshrined there. Yet Euston Hastings, even thus preferred, might have envied the confidence in his rival's magnanimity which made it Evelyn's first impulse, in this most trying moment of her life, to reveal to him all the conflicting emotions which disturbed her, and seek his counsel and his aid. But this impulse was checked by maidenly shame. How could she reveal to another that which she would gladly conceal from herself?—how could she acknowledge that her heart had been given to one who had not sought—who probably did not value it? The very thought sent the blood flushing to her brow. Where could she find language, voice for its expression?

In thoughts such as these was the hour spent which Evelyn had allotted to repose, and though she strove to smile when she appeared in her father's room again, Everard shook his head and whispered, "Not your own bright smile yet, dearest."

He proposed going for Mary, whose companionship would now, he thought, be valuable both to Evelyn and her father. As the weather was unusually mild, and little danger was therefore to be apprehended from the travelling or the change of climate for Mary, Mr. Beresford gladly accepted this proposal, and Everard commenced his journey to Baltimore early the next morning.

Relieved by his absence, and by Dr. Huntly's report of

her father, Evelyn spent the morning with him, exerting herself for his entertainment with something of her old cheerfulness. It was nearly noon when carriage-wheels were heard moving over the gravelled walks. They stopped.

"Who is it, Eva?" asked Mr. Beresford.

"Mrs. Mabury and—and—Mr. Hastings," replied Evelyn, who had advanced quickly to the window, and as quickly retreated.

She was called to the parlor, and the visiters saw Mr. Beresford separately, while she entertained each in turn during the absence of the other.

"Mr. Beresford seems quite unhappy at your confinement," said Euston Hastings to her at parting, "and, as walking is out of the question at this season, where there are no pavements, I have proposed to him to send for your horse. May I claim the privilege of riding with you sometimes, during Mr. Irving's absence?"

"Come here, Evelyn!" exclaimed Mr. Beresford, when she returned to his room, "let me see if you are as pale as Mr. Hastings seemed to think you—he quite disturbed me by his apprehensions for your health—Pale!" he repeated, as Evelyn stood beside him with the flush of pleasure mantling on her cheeks, "he must have a strange taste if he requires more color than that. Still, I am glad he spoke of it, for it reminded me of the necessity of exercise for you, and he has promised to send for your horse, and come occasionally and ride with you while Everard is away. It is very kind in him; perhaps Mrs. Mabury will join you too. I wonder," he continued, rambling on in the way in which the sick and the idle so often do, "I wonder they are not married; but I suppose she prefers to get through this lawsuit about her husband's will first."

The glow faded from Evelyn's cheek as she felt that her

father's supposition was but too probable; and her almost-forgotten belief in the engagement of Euston Hastings and Mrs. Mabury, was again established.

The next morning's sun rose bright and clear. The air was mild for the season—so mild that it might have been mistaken for May. Evelyn's horse arrived quite early in the morning, and about ten o'clock Euston Hastings presented himself. We have said he was a fearless rider, and we should have added, that he was perfect master of his horse, and rode with such easy and careless grace that nowhere was he seen to greater advantage than in the saddle. Then, there is certainly no position in which a gentleman may more agreeably manifest his interest in a lady, his tender regard for her safety, his anxiety for her comfort, than when attending her on a ride. And well did Euston Hastings understand the advantages of this position, and with accomplished tact did he avail himself of them. How carefully did he examine the saddle-girths himself, although the groom assured him that they had been well secured! With what tender grace did he place Evelyn in the saddle! Then placing his hand on the mane of his own horse, and vaulting at once into his seat, he led the way through a narrow road, spicy with the opening buds of the early spring. All around Evelyn was bright and joyous, and all within her was bright and joyous too. Desponding thoughts had been left in her father's still and darkened chamber. Here were the free air and the glorious heavens, looks which were the light of her soul, a voice which was its music,—and with her usual susceptibility to present impressions, she yielded to the influence of the hour, forgetful of Mrs. Mabury, of Everard Irving, of all that could trouble her joy.

"I am going to take you to one of my early haunts, Evelyn—that is, if I can find a practicable path to it," said

Euston Hastings, as, after riding about two miles, he turned aside into a road so long disused, that it was nearly grown up. He proceeded slowly, now holding back the overhanging branches till she had passed them, and now urging her horse through the thickly-grown shrubbery at which she hesitated.

"Come on, Evelyn," he said encouragingly, "but a few yards farther and you will find an open space. I have not been here for many years, yet every foot of the way is as familiar to me as the grounds of Beresford Hall are to you. It was my favorite resort in early youth, though even then it had been long deserted."

Even while he spoke the trees receded, and Evelyn found herself in a comparatively open space, exhibiting traces of having once been inhabited,—though tall shrubs had grown up amongst the former ornamental trees, and it was still difficult to proceed through them. Euston Hastings, however, broke through them, and she followed him till they stood beside a crumbling wall of brick, which formerly enclosed a garden, and saw before them the solid stone-work of what had once been part of an extensive house and offices. Most of the space which these had occupied was now covered by a shapeless mass of ruins; but one room at the southwest corner of the house still retained its walls and roof, though doors, windows, shutters, and all the inner wood-work, appeared to have been torn away. Evelyn looked around her with wonder.

"You have never been here, I see," said Euston Hastings.

"No; I have never even heard of such a place. To whom does it belong?"

"I know not who may now be called lord of the soil, for little else remains. It was the property of a lady, who married and has since lived abroad. She refused to sell

the place because here were the graves of her fathers. It was inhabited for some years after her departure; but the house was destroyed by an accidental fire, and has never been rebuilt. But follow me, Evelyn—this way," he added, as he put his horse in motion, "we can enter that room I think, and there is, or was once, a fine view from it of the river."

Evelyn obeyed his directions in silence. They drew near the wall, and through the unsashed and unshuttered window she looked into the dilapidated but not yet demolished room. Euston Hastings sprang from his horse and led hers to the window, saying—"If you have no objection, I should like to stand within the old walls again."

The window descended to the floor, and Evelyn stepped without hesitation from her saddle to its sill. Euston Hastings secured their horses to a tree, and joined her.

"See, Evelyn!" he exclaimed, pointing to a broken line of wall at the distance of some eight or ten yards, "this room probably opened on a flower-garden. It must have been a pleasant spot when you could look forth from those western windows on the river—now completely hidden, I see, by the thickening growth—and from these on flowery beds, and beyond them on majestic forest-trees or cultivated fields."

It might once have been a pleasant spot, but Evelyn felt that it was now a sad one, and she listened to his remarks in silence. He too seemed to feel a depressing influence, for his next words were in a low, subdued tone.

"And here," he said, "men have lived and died—these crumbling, deserted walls have echoed the festal song, the light laugh, and the sorrowful wail. Man has told his love here in the deep tones of passionate emotion, and woman has listened to him in the silence which is more eloquent than speech."

His eyes rested on Evelyn. She could not meet his fixed and passionate gaze, but she felt it sinking into her soul, and drawing her to him with mysterious power.

"May I speak and will you listen thus, Evelyn?"

She trembled violently, and suffered herself to rest almost unconsciously on the arm which he extended for her support. He gazed long and fondly on her downcast face, which her small riding-cap left fully exposed, before he spoke again. He would not, with the impetuosity of youth, exhaust too quickly his cup of pleasure,—slowly and deliberately he tasted its every drop.

"Now, dear one," he resumed, "you know me in truth for your lover. While I believed your heart was given to another, I might talk of friendship,—but yesterday—" he paused, and the rushing blood dyed yet more deeply Evelyn's already crimsoned cheeks,—"it was not Mr. Irving whom you believed in danger,—not for him that you suffered and rejoiced. Nay, turn not from me,—if you would find a hiding-place, let it be here, beloved!" and he folded her to his bosom.

Bewildered, agitated, Evelyn lay there as in a blissful dream. One fair cheek was still visible, and Euston Hastings watched with delight the blushes and dimpling smiles which flitted over it at his whispered words.

"I could stay thus forever, love," he said at length, "but you tremble—your hands are cold, and I must not risk my just-won treasure; yet, though afraid to keep you here, I cannot let you go till your own lips have told me that you are mine—it is but three little words I ask."

He paused and bent his head. The sweet lips moved, and the smile which lighted Euston Hastings' eyes, and the bright flush which rose to his pale brow, told that he had received the assurance he desired, though it could scarce be said that a whisper stirred the air.

"I cannot be too careful of my own," he said tenderly, and unbuckling his short riding-cloak, he threw it over the sill of the window, and placed Evelyn on it in a reclining position, while he went to bring up their horses. In a few minutes he was again at her side, and with a tenderness which he well knew how to throw into his slightest actions, he raised her to the saddle, placed the little foot he held within its stirrup, and kissed the hand to which he relinquished the bridle,—then throwing his own bridle over his arm, he walked beside her, removing every possible obstruction from her path, and supporting her in the saddle where the difficulties in the way were of a kind which he could not remove. Evelyn listened almost in silence to his expressions of tenderness. Hers was that rapturous happiness for which earthly language has no expression, but Euston Hastings read it in her varying color, in the timid consciousness which kept her eye averted from his, and in the trembling of the hand he clasped. He proceeded slowly, lengthening out his enjoyment to the utmost, yet far sooner than he wished, sooner perhaps than Evelyn herself desired, they approached the public road.

"We are about to leave our paradise for the world, my Eve," said he playfully, "but since we go together I will not complain. Before we turn 'back to busy life again,' from this sweet solitude, let me once more strive to thank you for the gift you have this day made me. Earth has no treasure, love, which could buy from me the memory of the last bright hour, or the yet brighter hopes which it has enkindled. If I could spare one thought from my own joy, it would be to pity him from whom I have snatched it."

Withdrawing the arm which had encircled her, he was turning away to mount his horse, when Evelyn uttered a sudden exclamation, and rested her hand upon his shoulder

to detain him. Looking into her face, he saw there an expression of pain and embarrassment, and again drawing near to her he inquired, "What is the matter, dearest?"

"Mr. Irving—I had forgotten—I fear he will think—he will feel—" she found it impossible to proceed further, and Euston Hastings, after waiting a moment, replied to the thoughts which he divined.

"Mr. Irving will doubtless be very much grieved when he discovers that another has won her whom he sought; but think you he would be better pleased if this hand were his without the heart's consent, or would my Eva shadow her spotless purity and transparent truth by a union unhallowed by love?—No, dearest—I am assured you could not. Mr. Irving is an estimable young man, and deserves the friendly regard that you have given him, but he could not love you as I love, Eva—passionately—madly—it is not in his nature. Be frank with him, he will appreciate your frankness, and cease to be your lover only to become your friend."

Did Euston Hastings believe all which he thus boldly asserted? We know not, but his confidence at least convinced Evelyn of his truth,—a truth which found in her a ready believer, because it accorded both with her wishes and with the impressions already entertained by her of Everard. Long had she been accustomed to silence the accusations of her own heart, when conscious of greater coldness towards him than their relations excused, by saying to herself, "Mr. Irving is so calm, so cold himself, that he would not desire to awaken a warmer emotion." True, there were times when a sudden rush of feeling overthrew the barriers he had with such difficulty erected, and an irrepressible exclamation, a look, a sudden uncontrollable movement betrayed the passion of his soul. But these times were of rare occurrence, and Evelyn soon forgot what

it was painful to remember. She had not yet so read that strange book, man's heart, as to recognise in his self-control the strongest evidence of his love and her power. She seemed to Everard so pure and gentle, so like the

"——— angel shapes that bless
An infant's dream—"

that he feared to utter in her presence the tones of earthly passion, and with a power over himself which he had never before exercised, he had suffered no feeling to breathe before her which could disturb her tranquillity—which was not pure and gentle as herself.

"Have you fulfilled your promise to me of acquainting Miss Beresford with your peculiar religious opinions," asked Mrs. Mabury, when Euston Hastings communicated to her his success with Evelyn.

"Nay, Estelle, you surely could not expect that I should mingle a theological discussion, or a confession of faith, with my first avowal of love. I could think of no Heaven to-day but that which beamed in Evelyn's eyes and hung upon her lips. Passionless, Elton called her—never was spirit at once so pure and so impassioned enshrined in form so beautiful—and she is mine! Mine! when my life seemed already past its meridian splendor. Mine! Estelle, spite of all pledges upon earth or vows to Heaven, as you shall learn to-morrow."

On that morrow, at noon, Euston Hastings and Evelyn stood together in Mr. Beresford's library. They had come to select some books for him. The selection had been made, and Euston Hastings was now looking idly on the titles of the volumes around him. On one shelf he read aloud, "Spinoza, Helvetius, Hume, Diderot, Voltaire, Kant, Paley, Butler, Locke, Stewart, Reid—your father is liberal, I see, Evelyn, and does not proscribe men because of their opinions on speculative questions."

"My father says, experience has made him tolerant, for that his own mind was in early life long bewildered by the subtilties of an infidel writer, and that he is not now a more conscientious believer in truth than he was then in falsehood."

"Truth! falsehood! who shall venture to say what is truth?" exclaimed Euston Hastings.

"His belief now," said Evelyn timidly, "is not in the opinions of men, but in the word of God."

"Received as such on the opinions of men—but pardon me, Evelyn," he continued, seeing her shrink back as if in terror at his words, "pardon me, I did not mean to say a word that should unsettle your faith; for worlds I would not deprive you of the comfort which you may derive from your belief in another and brighter world, where the disorders of this will be rectified and its sorrows be forever at rest."

Evelyn's eyes were bent upon the floor, her countenance was clouded; at length looking up to him, she said with evident effort, "And have not you this comfort too?"

He met her eye boldly and answered promptly, "No, Evelyn, no; not even the fear of your displeasure, perhaps of your estrangement, can make me hesitate to speak the truth. For me there is no such sweet illusion. I see in this our world but a 'congregation of vapors,' not always pestilent, for they sometimes combine in such proportions as almost to force us to believe in the existence of angels; but, alas! experience teaches us that even in these lovely forms their adhesion endures not forever. The cloud vanishes, the flower fades, and man dies; happy they who can believe that from the dust which has fed vegetation for successive years, or been borne afar on the winds of heaven, he shall arise again in his beauty and strength! But must those, whose inflexible reasons will not bow to such a creed,

lose the joys of earth as well as those of an anticipated Heaven? For me there is no future, Evelyn, shall I have no joy in the present? Of you I ask, for the answer depends on you. Thick darkness is before me, of all which it veils I see only the grave—shall I walk to it lonely and despairing, or shall I go with this dear hand clasped thus in mine? will you light my path by your love and make for me too a Heaven? Speak, love; my Heaven, my all, hangs upon your lips."

Twice those lips moved ere Euston Hastings' attentive ear caught the murmured words, "Have I not said, I am yours?"

"Mine—my beautiful—my beloved—mine only!"

"The battle has been fought and the victory won, Estelle," exclaimed Euston Hastings, entering Mrs. Mabury's boudoir on the evening of this day with more animation than she had ever seen him exhibit; "Evelyn is now mine indeed."

"But of what battle, what victory did you speak?"

"Of what battle? do you account it a slight achievement to enter the lists against such a man as Mr. Irving, with the advantage of a prior engagement on his side?"

"With some ladies, a prior engagement, especially one which had endured for two or three months, would be no slight *disadvantage*."

"With some ladies, doubtless, but not with Evelyn Beresford. This, however, was not the battle to which I had reference. I have this day met boldly the strongest prejudices of our nature, religious prejudices, and I have conquered. The faith which can remove mountains," he added with a sneer, "has yielded to Love."

"Yielded at the first attack, it seems—an easy victory! However I am too much occupied with other affairs to talk of it now. I am weary of New York; I would as soon

spend my life in a convent, with its eternal repetition of anthems and aves, as in this continual round of soulless gayeties, where simpering ladies and well-dressed gentlemen pace with measured step the same unvarying circle, beyond which no foot ever ventures. I am sick to death of it. Monsieur and Madame L'Egaré are dying of *ennui* from the same cause, and to-morrow we set out for the South. We are told that we shall find greater variety there—at any rate there will be some relief in travelling."

"But—your business?"

"I have done all I can in preparation for the suit, and it will not come on before the June term. I shall return here before that time."

Euston Hastings felt and looked dissatisfied. After some minutes' silence, he said, "I think you have scarcely treated me well, Estelle, in communicating your plans only at the last moment, and when you know that I have assumed obligations which make it impossible for me to leave this place. Had you told me sooner, I might have gone with you."

"Gone with us! Leave *la belle* Evelyn!" exclaimed Mrs. Mabury, with more spirit than she had hitherto shown. "Nay, nay—you jest."

"Jest or not, there is no time now to think of it; but only delay your departure for a month, and I will marry Evelyn, and take her with us."

"Impossible—we have but little more than two months now, for, as I have told you, I must be here in June."

"A fortnight then—there is much to be done, but I will engage to accomplish all in that time."

"I do not doubt you could, but I cannot detain my friends even for a fortnight."

"A week then—stay a week only, and I will persuade Evelyn to elope with me—a marriage *à la regle* will be impossible in that time."

"Cannot you persuade her to go without any marriage at all?"

It was rarely that Mrs. Mabury suffered any thing so like a sneer to be seen in her face, or heard in her tones, as was evident in them at this moment.

"Estelle is piqued," said Euston Hastings to himself, and with the thought his annoyance at her projected departure vanished. "She will return," he continued, "just in time to prevent my experiencing the insipidity of an American *ménage:* for a little while it is perhaps as well that she should be away. Evelyn must occupy me almost wholly for the next few weeks."

Such were his thoughts—his answer, with scarce a perceptible pause, was, "No, no—not in so short a time at least. All conventionalisms—mere conventionalisms she would, I am convinced, readily yield to me; but it would take some time—more than a week, I fear—to convince her that marriage is only a conventionalism, and then, if I succeeded, these things are made matters of such moment in this country, that I should probably find '*le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle.*' So I must submit to my fate, and consent to be separated from you for a little time, but I shall anxiously expect your return. By your enlivening intercourse you will communicate that piquant flavor which will prevent my dish of matrimony palling on the sense."

"You speak *en prophète,*—it is scarcely safe to answer for what I will do two months hence. But here comes Monsieur L'Egaré to tell me what I must do to-morrow—Entrez, monsieur."

CHAPTER VIII.

"His heart is seared,
A sweet light has been thrown upon its love,
To make its darkness the more terrible—
And this is Love!"

L. E. L.

Bitter indeed had been the struggle between pride and passion in Mrs. Mabury's heart since Euston Hastings had first confided to her his intentions respecting Evelyn. Many times had she been tempted to resign the first. One look of tenderness, one word of regret from Euston Hastings, and she would have thrown herself into his arms, and avowed the devotion which he professed to value in another; but she saw that, if she had ever touched his heart, newer charms had, for a time at least, broken her spell, and that her confession would probably win for her only a cold, perhaps a contemptuous pity—and she endured. But she feared that she could not long continue to see, to hear his love for another, and yet cloak with gay smiles the serpents which lay coiled around her heart, and struck deep within it their envenomed fangs. From this fear arose her present plan of leaving New York. She would have preferred to go alone, but she had no good excuse, and to go without one would have been to risk a betrayal of her secret. Monsieur and Madame L'Egaré, unoccupied and loving change, were easily induced to desire travel. It was just the time to visit the South; they had brought letters to persons in Carolina and Georgia, and so all was easily arranged. But not so easily accom-

plished, for who shall speak the misery of that sleepless night—the agony of that parting hour?

"Estelle, you are ill," said Euston Hastings, as he saw her face at one moment pale as death, at the next wearing a crimson flush.

"Ill—I am sorry," she answered vaguely, having caught the last word without at all understanding his meaning.

"But you should not go thus."

"Not go!" she repeated again, rallying her energies to comprehend and reply to him. "Oh! I do not doubt I shall find it very pleasant, and if I do not, I can return, you know."

"Well, at any rate you must not prolong your absence beyond June—if you do, I shall come in search of you. But Madame L'Egaré looks impatient—so adieu!—Evelyn will be grieved that she has not seen you."

He placed her in the carriage, kissing the hand he held. As the door was closed, she drew her veil over her face, and waved her hand in reply to his adieu. The coachman was already on his box. He flourished his whip, the horses darted forward, and they were separated.

"So ends that act of life's drama," said Euston Hastings to himself. He was mistaken, it had not ended yet.

While Mrs. Mabury was thus leaving New York, Mary Raymond was returning thither to encounter that very trial from which she fled. But she came not in her own strength—she had humbled herself beneath her Father's chastening hand, and He had shed light upon her path by which she saw love presiding over every cross. Not without the most lively emotion had she again seen Everard Irving. She had acquired no stoic insensibility—she was yet a loving woman, and her heart had throbbed and her cheek flushed as of old at his words of affectionate greeting. When, in their first private interview he communicated to her his full conviction

of Evelyn's love, and her father's changed purpose in relation to their marriage, she shrank and drew her breath quickly, as if a sword had entered her heart; but when that first pang had passed, she turned her thoughts resolutely from herself to him, and soon with her prayers for him arose a thanksgiving for herself that she was able to rejoice in his joy.

"Mary, you are very much changed," said Everard to her one day, as they sat alone together. She was reading, and he too held a book; but his eye was fixed, not on its pages, but on her face, which, instead of the listless melancholy stamped on it when first we introduced her to the reader, wore an expression of serene beauty.

"My health is much improved since I parted from you," replied Mary.

"Yes, and that of course has produced some alteration in your appearance, but that is not what I mean."

"What then?"

"Something not so easily described as felt. I parted from you a dependent, sometimes I thought—pardon me for it, Mary—a wayward girl, and in these few short months you seem to have started up into

> 'A perfect woman nobly planned,
> To warn, to comfort, and command;
> And yet a spirit, still and bright,
> With something of an angel light.'"

"You have learned to flatter, I see."

"On my honor, Mary, I speak the truth when I say that, in my opinion those lines, and especially the last two, might have been written for you; and as to flattery, you are one to whom I would not dare to address it."

Mary turned away, and looked out of the window.

Everard Irving visited Mr. Manelli. He was received

ith almost as much joy as Mary, who accompanied him, ad been. He was conducted to the artist's studio, and w there the picture, now completed, of the "Death of ocrates."

"Do you recognise any acquaintance among those fig-es?" asked Aspasié Manelli, with a smiling glance at her ther.

Everard gazed long, but could find none.

"You are not so quick-sighted as Miss Raymond—she cognised an old friend in Alcibiades at once. Ah! you e it now, though you are too modest to acknowledge it."

"If you mean that it resembles me, you will not wonder at I wish to possess myself of such a flattering likeness. ou must sell me this picture," he added, turning to Mr. anelli.

"I cannot—I have promised it to Miss Raymond al-ady."

"To Mary!—why, what can you want with it, Mary?—ou have no house to decorate."

"But I have some taste, I hope, to appreciate its beauty, id love enough for Mr. Manelli to value it for its associa-on with him, were it far less beautiful."

"If it is to be adjudged to the one who has the most asons for desiring it, it will be mine, Mary; for, added those you have adduced, I have another yet more pow-rful."

Everard spoke smilingly, and approaching Mary, bent is head and whispered in her ear, "I want it for Evelyn, he will value that likeness so much."

What martyr at the stake ever exercised greater heroism han is demanded from woman in moments such as these!

Mary stooped as if to remove a portfolio of engravings rom the floor, and as she turned to the table to replace hem, said carelessly to Mr. Manelli, "Mr. Irving desires

this picture so greatly that I will withdraw my claims to it on condition that I have another from your pencil."

"Thank you, Mary, you are very kind," said Everard gladly; "but," he added hesitatingly, looking at Mr. Manelli, "our friend here does not appear quite satisfied."

"Ah, yes!—quite—it can make no difference to me, you know."

But it did make some difference. Mr. Manelli loved Mary as a daughter, and was pleased that this child of his genius should belong to her. He loved Everard too, but he half suspected the meaning of that whisper, and felt that the picture was probably to become the property of one, who, while she could derive no gratification from its association with him, might not have taste enough to value it for itself. Aspasié, however, was soon won to favor Everard's claim, when he proclaimed his design to place the picture in the approaching exhibition of the "Academy of Arts," and his conviction that it would thus obtain for the painter far greater advantages than any price could confer.

At the time of which we write, but two steamboats traversed the waters of the Chesapeake, and Everard was detained several days waiting for one, which, proceeding from Norfolk, should touch at Baltimore, and take Mary and himself on their way to New York. While thus waiting, he wrote to Evelyn, announcing the day on which she might expect to see them, and requesting that she would address a letter to him in Philadelphia, where they should remain a night, informing him of her father's present condition. On his arrival in Philadelphia a letter accordingly awaited him, but he was deeply disappointed, and at first somewhat alarmed, to find that it was not from Evelyn but from Dr. Huntly.

The Doctor, however, assured him that Evelyn was quite well and Mr. Beresford entirely out of danger, though the

effects of his fall were still painfully visible in his greater feebleness and frequent pain in the head, attributable probably to the severe blow he had received there. Dr. Huntly had other information to give which greatly surprised Everard. "Mr. Beresford's condition," he wrote, "renders it very desirable that he should be near his medical advisers for some weeks to come, and he has fortunately been able to accomplish this object by a very pleasant arrangement. You will find Miss Beresford and himself *at home* at Mrs. Mabury's late mansion. The fatigue of this removal has obliged my friend Evelyn to employ me as her amanuensis, a circumstance which I cannot flatter myself will give you much pleasure, and which I doubt not the little gipsy herself regrets."

Mary and Everard knew not what to think of this information. "What has become of Mrs. Mabury?" was a question both often asked, and neither could, of course, answer. It was evening when they arrived in New York. They drove immediately to Mrs. Mabury's, now Mr. Beresford's. They were expected, and if Evelyn did not express great pleasure in meeting them, all deficiency in her was concealed by her father's noisy demonstrations of joy. Yet the house seemed sombre to Everard. He had seen it always brilliantly lighted, and generally with many visiters moving about its various rooms. Now the front of the house was dimly lighted by the hall-lamp alone, and the only room on the first floor which seemed to be occupied was that formerly known as Evelyn's boudoir. He could find no opportunity of speaking to Evelyn in private. She never left Mary for a moment, and his attempts to lure her away she either did not see or would not understand.

"Where is Mrs. Mabury?" was a question which it may be supposed our travellers did not long delay.

The answer only stimulated their curiosity.

"Gone to travel at the South with Monsieur and Madame L'Egaré, and without Mr. Hastings! Can they have quarrelled?" was their next inquiry.

"Certainly not," Mr. Beresford replied, "for he has been left her agent, and it was with his consent, and indeed by his advice, that we have removed to her house."

"He visits you then," said Everard quickly.

"Oh, yes! daily; indeed he has been very attentive to us, and has tried in every way to make us forget your absence."

"He is very kind," said Everard, but his tone was cold, and he glanced at Evelyn with an uneasy sensation for which he blamed himself the next moment. She did not meet his glance, for she was at that moment arranging the drapery of one of the windows.

The little party was assembled in Mr. Beresford's room when the clock struck nine.

"We keep early hours, Everard, and I must send you away now," said Mr. Beresford; "you may come as soon as you please again to-morrow."

"Surely you do not retire at nine," said Everard in a low tone to Evelyn, as in obedience to this announcement he rose to take leave of Mr. Beresford; "can I not see you a few minutes below."

"I have not seen Mary for so long—I have so much to say to her," she answered falteringly. Everard urged her no farther.

If Evelyn's real motive for not according this interview was the desire to converse with Mary, she probably was induced to defer the gratification from her friend's apparent fatigue, for Everard had scarcely gone before she proposed withdrawing to their own apartments, and though she attended Mary to hers, she remained there but a short time before retiring to her own.

The room which Evelyn had destined to Mary, and which she supposed had been prepared for her, was in the front of the house, and separated only by a wide hall from Mr. Beresford's; but Mary's old attendant, Betty, had objected to this as too noisy, and had chosen instead to take possession for her young mistress of a room in the rear of the house, opposite to Evelyn's, and opening, like hers, on a verandah. Evelyn herself pointed out this fact to Mary, and also showed her the gate which led from the yard into the street on the south side of the house. "Now, Mary," she added, "if you feel any apprehension at sleeping in so accessible a room while in this city of house-breakers, your baggage can be easily transferred to the other room."

Mary assured her that she was not in the least apprehensive since she had herself remained unmolested, though exposed to the same danger, and moreover, that she was unwilling to relinquish the comfort of a fire which Betty had kindled, with a few sticks of wood in the little grate, where they crackled and blazed, sending forth a cheerful light, and just warmth enough for the chilly but not cold evening.

"As to being disturbed by my fears," she added, "I doubt if a robber himself would awake me to-night, unless he should attempt to carry me off as well as my property."

But fatigued as Mary was, sleep came not so quickly as she expected. "Thought, busy thought," still wrought in that spirit-forge—the brain,—now flashing its light on scenes long past—now striving from that black and hard metal whereof her fortunes seemed made, to work out forms of enduring beauty. Time passes slowly with those who thus wake when they should sleep, and it seemed to Mary as if hours had been spent by her in this manner, when the clock of a neighboring church chimed forth eleven. Again a long time passed—half an hour—perhaps three-

quarters—when she was startled by a sound resembling a step, sudden, decided, like that of a man springing from some height to the floor of the verandah, and, as it seemed to her, quite near her own window. The sound was so distinct that Mary could not even attempt to persuade herself that it was nothing, but she said, "It may be a dog—I will see at least."

Rising from her bed, she advanced to the window and drew aside the drapery. It was very dark, for besides that there was no moon, and the night was cloudy, a large tree whose branches touched the iron railing of the verandah threw its shadow over that portion of it which Mary's window commanded,—yet close to the wall of the house in such a position that she could only gain a partial view of it, she thought, as her eyes became accustomed to the darkness, that she could distinguish some object.

"I could see it better from my dressing-room window," thought Mary, and wrapping her cloak around her, she proceeded softly thither. There she could see still less, for the venetian blinds were closed, but a pane of glass was out, and as Mary stood for a moment with her ear near the empty space, she thought she heard a whisper. She was now thoroughly alarmed, but her alarm was of that nature which sharpens the senses, instead of dulling them. She leaned her head forward so that her ear touched the blind, and instantly not only whispered sounds, but words became audible to her. She remembered that Evelyn had told her their dressing-rooms adjoined, and at once it flashed on her that the words were spoken by some one standing in the verandah, at the window of Evelyn's dressing-room, and consequently very near her own, and that they were addressed to some person within that dressing-room.

"It was not loud enough, dearest, to awake any one who slept, so you need not tremble thus; yet had I

known she slept on this side, I would have been more cautious."

Mary sought in vain to hear any thing again for some minutes. Either the person within the room was speaking, or the other leaning forward, had removed himself farther from her. At length she caught the words, "I came provided, as usual, with a serenade, and that, even in this land of formalities, is admitted as a valid excuse for as near an approach as bolts and bars will permit to one's mistress. If I hear the slightest sound, I will sing. But what has passed between you?"

All was silence for a time, or sounds so soft and so mingled that Mary could distinguish nothing; then came the word "delay," and after a while more distinctly, "I must help you, I see,"—and then caught with difficulty, at intervals, "my serenade"—"ask questions"—"tell her all;"—then followed a soft, earnest, impressive "good-night," on which the voice seemed to linger, as if loth to end it; then longer stillness—perfect stillness, and then a step stealing quietly away. Mary still remained at her post, fearing lest any movement should betray her. After a few minutes the strings of a guitar were struck lightly, and a rich, mellow voice, in a low tone, but with very distinct enunciation, sang the following

SERENADE.

Sleep, Eva, sleep,—though dark the night,
And not a star looks forth above,
Around thee beams a holy light
From Heaven's own star—the star of Love.

Sleep, Eva, sleep,—the night is still,
The breezes scarce a leaflet move;
Yet tones to which thy pulses thrill,
Are floating round thee, breathed by love.

Sleep, Eva, sleep,—those breathings bear
My spirit in its raptured flight,
To murmur in thy dreaming ear
A lover's passionate good-night.

The song ceased. Suddenly the branches of the tree before Mary were violently moved. They bowed themselves and swept against the iron railing as if a tempest had agitated them, then became in a moment quiet as ever. Long Mary listened and looked, but she listened and looked in vain; and when convinced that this mysterious visiter had indeed departed, she retired again to bed—to bed, but not to sleep.

Who was this visiter, and—yet more important question—by whom had he been received? Could it be that Evelyn Beresford—the guileless, the pure—was thus false to herself, and treacherous to him to whom she had pledged her faith? Could she have deceived the father who trusted as well as loved her,—of whom she had said to Everard Irving that she could not sleep with a secret unrevealed to him? Above all, could she so betray the delicacy, the dignity of her sex? All this seemed incredible; yet that any one could thus assume her name, and hold these midnight colloquies even within her hearing, was more incredible still. In wild conjectures much of Mary's night passed away, and she had had but little sleep when Betty's entrance warned her that it was time to prepare for breakfast. When she descended to the breakfast-room, Mary found Evelyn awaiting her there. Even in the dim light of the preceding evening she had seen that the months of their separation had not left Evelyn wholly unchanged. She had grown taller, her form had expanded into fuller proportions, and fashion had set its seal upon her dress and air. But now, by the better light of morning, it seemed to Mary that a new character had been impressed upon her face,—the brow betokened

thought, and the flexible lines of the mouth a sensibility which had not been awakened by pleasure alone. As she approached to offer Mary her morning kiss, there was unusual hesitation and timidity in her manner. Painfully undecided in her impressions of last night's adventure, yet more undecided in the conduct she should herself pursue in relation to it, Mary bent her eyes upon her with an almost unconscious scrutiny, beneath which Evelyn's face flushed, and her eyes sank. When next she raised them, they were moist "with unshed tears." The presence of servants rendered any confidential communication impossible, and it was probably a relief to both the friends when a message from Mr. Beresford summoned Evelyn away. Before her return, Mary had sought her own room. Half an hour had passed away there in a vain effort to interest herself in a book, when there was a gentle tap at her door, and Evelyn entered. She was paler than usual, and there was in her face a yet more unusual expression of resolution. She advanced to Mary, threw her arms around her, and resting her head upon her shoulder, looked up with tender entreaty in her face, as she said, "Do not look so coldly on me, Mary. Love me," she added, pressing closely to her side, "for I need your love much, though perhaps you may think, when you know all, that I do not deserve it."

Mary, when her own nature had been ruled by passionate impulses, had found it impossible to resist the pleading tenderness of Evelyn's manner, and now she yielded to it instantly, and for some minutes thought only of soothing, by gentle words and fond caresses, the weeping girl. When she saw her in some degree restored to composure, she drew a chair beside her own, and said, "Now, Evelyn, sit down by me, and let us speak calmly of what disturbs you. You said just now that when I knew all, perhaps I might think you undeserving my love. Are you going to tell me this all?"

Evelyn's lips moved, but no sound issued from them.

"Evelyn," said Mary, bending forward and pressing her lips to Evelyn's cheek, "if you had a mother, you would speak to her. Is it not easier to speak to a sister—to one scarcely older and not less faulty than yourself?"

"Ah, Mary! if that were so—but you have never loved."

Evelyn's voice was almost lost as she pronounced these last words, yet Mary heard them, and a bright flush rose to her cheeks.

"At least, Evelyn," she said, after a moment's pause, "I do not consider love a fault."

"But it may lead us into faults—can you excuse these for its sake?"

"Does love—a true love—lead to faults—to conscious faults? It seems to me, dear Evelyn, that it can have its source only in the excellence of another, and that it leads to excellence in ourselves. It may bring into evident life the selfish and evil principles of our nature, but it is by its struggle with them; and as love conquers we are purified, and ever—ever—it leads us into higher, holier life."

There was something so impressive in Mary's tone, that Evelyn raised her drooping head, and looked up into her face. Its expression was lofty, as if she had herself experienced the purifying influence of which she spoke, and had herself been led into that higher, holier life. It was an expression which did not encourage Evelyn in her intended confession, and shaking her head sadly, her eyes again fell in silence to the ground.

"Evelyn," asked Mary, "do you reject me as your sister?"

Evelyn answered by a silent embrace.

"Can there be love without confidence, Evelyn? But I will make your confidence easier to you. I hoped to have

had it all unsought when you came to me—but I see you cannot easily trust me."

"Oh, yes! I trust you—but I fear you too."

"That is because you do not know how, with me, frankness covers all faults. Listen to me now, however, and you will find that you have not so much to tell as you think; but first come near me, as you did just now—put your arm around my neck, your head upon my shoulder, your other hand in mine—now tell me who it was that last night sang beneath your window, and with whom, before he sang, you talked from your dressing-room? Ah, Evelyn! I would not be a true sister to you, if I did not join my voice to the true and delicate instincts which make you hide your head within my bosom at the memory of that scene. It was wrong, Evelyn, not to yourself only—"

"Mary, was it very wrong thus to meet one whom I have promised one day—soon—very soon—to marry?" whispered Evelyn.

"To marry!" exclaimed Mary, "you surely would not say, Evelyn, that your last night's visiter was Everard Irving? No, no—I know his voice too well for this—nay, more, I know his heart too well—know that no selfish gratification could make him thus forgetful of the honor and delicacy of her he loved! No, Evelyn—it was one less noble than he."

Evelyn had withdrawn from Mary's arms while she spoke, and now stood before her with flushed brow and flashing eyes,—friendship, shame, all forgotten,—nothing remembered but her love.

"You are right," she said passionately, "in one thing—it was not Mr. Irving; but you are mistaken in all else, —for it was one nobler far than he—one whose intense feelings spurn the cold calculations which govern him—

whose loftier intellect suffers not the world's opinions to control his actions—"

It had been strange to see that gentle, timid being wrought to such passionate boldness,—but stranger still was the instantaneous change in her countenance and attitude, the sudden pause in her torrent of words, as she caught the echo of a quick step approaching, and after a tap at the door, heard a glad voice calling—"Mary, is Evelyn with you? I have a message for her from her father?"

There was eager haste in the tones, as if the message was one Everard Irving liked well to bear. Mary's heart was stung, but it was for him she suffered. Evelyn caught her sad and reproachful glance, and in an instant she was beside her, pressing her hand in hers while she exclaimed —"Oh, Mary! forgive me—pity me—for I am well-nigh mad—what shall I do?—I dare not see him."

"I am coming, Everard," cried Mary, in answer to his repeated calls. "Be quiet, Evelyn, you shall not see him till you are more calm, but I must speak to him."

She advanced to the door, while Evelyn shrank cowering away to the remotest part of the room, lest she should be seen. Opening the door, Mary said, "Evelyn cannot see you now, Everard, but if you will go to the parlor, she will come to you there in a few minutes."

She commanded herself to speak calmly, yet she could not banish from her tones and manner so much sadness, that had Everard been less engrossed by his own joyful emotions, he must have perceived it. As it was, he answered with a saucy smile, which told at once his confidence and joy, "I go, but tell her I shall exact a forfeit for every five minutes' delay."

"And now, Evelyn," said Mary, as she turned again to her, "go to him and tell him the truth—the whole truth·

but, oh Evelyn! tell it to him gently. You know him not —he feared to startle your timid nature by pouring out his whole passionate soul before you; but he loves you as only the delicate and true-hearted love. Fear not for yourself, for he is generous and will forgive you, if even now you speak the truth to him; but, oh Evelyn! I pray you, speak it tenderly, or you will break his heart."

Had Evelyn's own emotions left her any power of observing another's, she would have gazed with surprise on Mary, but a moment since, so calm, so elevated above all earthly passion as she seemed; and now so wildly earnest, so vehement in her entreaties. The intensity of her feelings increased Evelyn's fears. She began to feel somewhat of the responsibility which she had assumed by her engagement with Everard; began to be aware how fearful a thing it was to permit a human heart so to link itself to her that all its hopes and joys should hang suspended upon her, and then to dash them to the earth and crush them into nothingness. Trembling and pale she approached the door, opened it, and stood for a moment irresolute upon its threshold, then shrinking back, closed it again, and covering her face with her hands, exclaimed, "Mary, I cannot look on him, I cannot tell him—it will kill me."

"Evelyn, if you will not go, I must; he shall not be left longer to such—"

"And will you go, dear Mary?" interrupted Evelyn before she could proceed farther, "will you go? Oh! how I bless you for the thought! Go, I pray you, go without delay; but, oh Mary! let him not hate me—I knew not myself when I listened to him—I understood not what he asked. Pray him to forgive me—without his forgiveness I shall be wretched forever."

Mary scarcely heard her—she was struggling for strength to deal a blow, the heaviest, the most terrible that earthly

hand could inflict, on the heart of him she loved so well. Suddenly she freed herself from Evelyn's caressing arm, and falling on her knees beside the bed, bowed her head on it for a moment in silence, then rising, she withdrew slowly from the room without a word.

As Mary opened the door of the room in which Everard sat, he turned quickly towards her, with a countenance beaming with gladness. It was somewhat clouded at perceiving that it was not Evelyn who entered.

"Where is Evelyn, Mary? Did you give her my message?"

"I did, Everard."

"And why does she not come? It is unkind in her to try me thus."

At this moment the gravity of Mary's manner appeared to attract his observation, and he added, "Is any thing the matter with you, Mary? Did you wish to see me first?"

"Not on my own account, Everard; but I did wish to see, to speak with you of yourself, of Evelyn."

"And what would you say of Evelyn? Speak freely, as a dear sister should—but speak quickly too," he added with a smile.

The more joyful Everard seemed, the more difficult did Mary feel her task to be. She hastened to speak at his command, but her first words seemed to have little connection with that which she had come to reveal.

"A sister should indeed speak freely to a dear brother—a dear and only brother. Dear Everard—my brother Everard, have you ever felt how tender a tie this is? a tie which no earthly circumstances can change, which sorrow can only draw nearer?"

"Yes, Mary, I have felt all its sweetness and its power; and even now, blest as I am in Evelyn's love, my happiness

would be but half complete if I could not share it with you. You will live with us, Mary; you will be *our* sister."

"But, Everard, is this tie of brother, dear brother, such that it could give some sweetness to life, if you were disappointed of other affection? If even now your bright hopes were quenched, could you find some solace in knowing that to one heart—to my heart—you are dearer than any other earthly object, that I live in your life, rejoice in your joy, and would think nothing a sacrifice whereby I might shield you from the touch of sorrow?"

Mary had drawn nearer and nearer to Everard as she spoke, till she stood just before him, with both his hands clasped in hers, her eyes, which were riveted upon his face, full of tears, and her voice of a tenderness to which no words could give entire expression.

"And you love me thus, Mary?" questioned Everard, surprised at such intensity of feeling in one whom he had sometimes in his heart accused of coldness, and conscious that his love for her could bear no comparison with the emotions she described.

"Yes, Everard; and yet I, who would rather die than see you suffer—I must inflict on you such pain! Oh, Everard! I have such words to speak to you, as you would rather see me in my grave than hear."

"Is Evelyn ill—dead, Mary?"

"No—no, Everard—think what is worse than the death of those we love."

"Their dishonor," said Everard, with a blanched cheek.

"Or their faithlessness."

With that irritability which the first touch of sorrow engenders, Everard withdrew his hands from Mary, and said, in a sharp, bitter tone, "Mary, I do not understand riddles —would you tell me that Evelyn has ceased to love me?"

"She says, Everard, that she misunderstood her own

feelings when she professed to love you, or, rather, when she consented to receive you as her lover."

"It is false!" burst from the half-maddened Everard, with wild impetuosity; but restraining himself with a powerful effort, he added, more calmly, "But one other question answered, and I shall have heard all—does she love another?"

"She does."

"The curses of a broken heart be upon them! May he prove as false to her—"

He could not proceed, for Mary's hand was upon his lips. He tore it thence, and threw her from him with such force, that she only saved herself from falling by catching at a table for support. The next instant she was again at his side, pleading, "Strike me, Everard, if you will, but hear me! Others have been false to you, be you true to yourself. If you can wish evil to Evelyn, because of injury done to you, it is only your own happiness you have loved in her, and you are wholly unworthy of her love; but I know it has not been so: you have loved her worthily, generously, and now, though your heart break at her desertion, you will not wish her evil—you will wish her good,—you will do her good, and thus take the only revenge which a noble mind can desire."

"Do her good!—forgive her! If you have told me truth, it is impossible."

"Difficult, but not impossible—not impossible to a noble mind—not impossible to you. Besides, Everard, when the first shock has passed, when you are able to think calmly—"

"Calmly!" ejaculated Everard, with bitterness.

Mary proceeded as if she had not heard him—"When you are able to think calmly of all that has passed, you will feel that Evelyn—"

"Name her not, if you would not madden me."

"I must name her, Everard. I must in justice say that she is less blameworthy than you will be at first disposed to think her."

"That is right, Mary;" and Everard laughed bitterly. "That is right—defend her—it would be folly indeed to cling to the friend whom all are deserting."

"I do cling to you, Everard, and that the more closely, because others have deserted you. Nothing is dearer to me than your happiness, except your worth. I do not defend Evelyn, but I will be just to her, and I do not believe she has ever willingly deceived you. I believe she loves you, though not as you love her. Her calm affection might have made her happy with you, had not another awakened a more passionate, a profounder emotion."

"And this other—who is he?"

"I know not."

Everard bent his head in his clasped hands, and remained for some minutes perfectly still. When he looked up again, the flush which his face had so lately worn was gone, and his eyes were heavy.

"Mary!" he exclaimed, "this seems some wild fancy of yours—I cannot believe it while I remember Evelyn's terror at my danger and joy at my safety—a fortnight—little more—such change is impossible. Mary! if you would not see me mad, let me see Evelyn—I pray you let me see her—only from her own lips can I receive this! Do not answer me, Mary, but go for her."

"I will go, Everard—I will bring her here; but oh, Everard! for your own sake do not see her now—wait—"

"Mary, you have never known the agony of doubt, or you could not talk to me of waiting. For what should I wait?"

"For the power to control your passion, Everard, and to act out your own generous nature. Everard, I would have

Evelyn know that your love was not a selfish passion—I would have her recognise the nobleness of the spirit she has wounded."

"Do not fear that I shall be harsh to Evelyn, Mary—I may have been so to you; but to her—only let me hear the truth from her lips."

Mary did not find it an easy task to persuade Evelyn to accompany her, but her firmness at length gained the victory.

"If you will go with me, Mary," said Evelyn. Mary answered by drawing her friend's arm through her own, and leading her to the room in which Everard awaited her.

"You will come in with me," said Evelyn—but Mary only crossed the threshold, and disengaging her arm, stepped back and closed the door after her. Everard Irving, on being left alone, had thrown himself upon a sofa, and clasped his hands over his eyes in a vain effort to arrange his wildly-confused thoughts. At the opening of the door he started up, and one glance of Evelyn's eyes had shown him standing opposite to her, and gazing on her, as if upon her next movement his fate hung suspended. Her eyes were instantly cast down with fear and shame, and she stood where Mary had left her, motionless—a breathing statue. They remained thus, perhaps, while one could have counted ten slowly, and then Everard spoke in low, sad tones.

"Evelyn—I see that Mary told me truth. I could not believe her words—but your looks confirm them: you never feared before to meet my eye, Evelyn."

Still she stood silent, trembling before him.

"How long is it, Evelyn," he resumed—"a fortnight I think—since your life seemed to hang on the assurance of my safety? Was that only seeming, or is this a dream? For Heaven's sake answer me, Evelyn," he added vehe-

mently, after a short pause; "answer me if you would not have me go mad."

"What shall I say, Mr. Irving—to what shall I answer?" faltered Evelyn.

"Your terror on the day of your father's accident—your wild questioning—your joy—was all this acting? was there no truth in it?"

"It was all true, Mr. Irving; but you may remember I never named you, and it was not you whom I supposed to be with my father."

"Whom then?"

Everard had approached quite near to Evelyn, yet twice her lips moved before he could catch the faintly breathed "Mr. Hastings."

"Mr. Hastings! Evelyn, that name realizes my worst fears: but you do not know him, Evelyn—ask of himself what are his religious sentiments."

"I know them already—he told them to me unasked," exclaimed Evelyn eagerly, anxious only to show her lover's frankness.

"You know them, Evelyn! Know that he is a scoffer at all things sacred—that for him there is no God—nothing spiritual in the universe, that even in you he sees no soul—know this, and love him, and give yourself to him! Can this be possible?"

Evelyn shrank before that severe, searching eye, and almost scornful smile, but she strove to assume a composure which she did not feel as she replied, "It would be hard, I think, to discard a friend for mere errors of judgment."

"And do you call those mere errors of judgment, Evelyn, which place all enjoyment in the gratification of the appetites and passions—which make life a revel, and its holiest ties but means of sensual pleasure? Evelyn, do you know that to Euston Hastings, the marriage vow is a senseless

mockery, to which what he terms the tyranny of society compels him to submit!"

A crimson flush rose to Evelyn's very temples, and as she turned her head aside Everard saw that her lip quivered.

"Heaven knows, Evelyn," he exclaimed, "that I would not willingly give you pain, but I could not disguise from you that such is reported to be Mr. Hastings' opinion. Ask him if it be so, Evelyn—promise me that you will ask him—not for my sake—my hope, my happiness is at an end forever—but for your own sake. Will you not promise me, Evelyn? I ask it as a last favor."

"I will, Mr. Irving."

Everard had now heard all—said all; he must now go. How often in that very room had he parted from her but for a few hours—a day at most—and yet parted not without clasped hands, and whispered words of tenderness!—now he went forever—and he must go coldly, silently. It seemed impossible: he approached her hurriedly, but he remembered that she was another's, and moved as hurriedly away: at the door he turned—she was looking towards him, and their eyes met; with one emphatic gesture he commended her to Heaven—the next instant the door closed on him—they had parted.

CHAPTER IX.

"My love doth so approve him
That even his stubbornness, his checks and frowns
Have grace and favor in them."

SHAKSPEARE.

SOME hours after Everard Irving's departure, in the same boudoir which had been the scene of such bitter suffering to him, stood Euston Hastings awaiting Evelyn, to whom a servant had gone to announce his presence. When Evelyn came, he approached her with a man's glove, which he had found on the carpet, in his hand.

"You look sad, my Eva, but I will not ask you why—Mr. Irving has been here I see," showing the glove.

"He has."

"And knows all?"

Evelyn did not answer—tears rushed into her eyes, and she turned her head aside to hide them from her companion.

"Fy, Eva!—I shall be jealous if you turn away from me to weep for him."

Euston Hastings put his arm around Evelyn, and leading her to the sofa, seated himself beside her.

"Now, Eva, tell me all. Has Mr. Irving relinquished all claim on your hand, now that he knows your heart is not his?"

"He has—we have parted forever," said Evelyn in an unsteady voice, while a tear slowly trickled down her cheek.

Euston Hastings kissed it away, as he said, "There is no

ever, Eva—all things cease, and so will your and Mr. Irving's estrangement; you will be excellent friends again one day—perhaps he may even marry my widow."

Evelyn could not smile at what seemed to her a most untimely jest. She replied gravely—"A friend, I doubt not, Mr. Irving will always be to me. Even this morning, in the midst of his own keen suffering, he thought of me—of my happiness—"

"Oh, yes! and most disinterestedly, no doubt, warned you against a marriage with me—was it not so?"

Evelyn hesitated, and stammered out a confused and almost contradictory answer, "He had not warned her—but he had doubted—had been afraid—"

"In short, Evelyn," interrupted Euston Hastings, "he has succeeded in introducing into your heart 'that ugly treason of mistrust.' Come, confess—it is your only chance for mercy,"—he continued, smiling gayly, and playfully bending his head that he might look into her downcast face.

"No, no—I have no mistrust—no treasonable thought against you to confess;—but he exacted a promise from me—I could not refuse him—he asked it as a last favor—"

Evelyn spoke timidly, apologetically, and paused without naming the promise she had made.

"Well, Eva—what was your promise?"

"To ask you a question."

"And what is the question?"

"Will you not be angry with me?—Will you remember that I ask it to fulfil a promise to another?"

"I shall not be angry with you, Evelyn, ask what question you will, but I do not promise to answer your question: if it relate wholly to myself, you are entitled to an answer, and shall have it; but if it compromise another—"

"It does not—it relates wholly to yourself—to your opinions."

"My opinions on what subject?—I thought I had told you all in them which such orthodox thinkers as Mr. Irving could blame."

Euston Hastings spoke with a sneer, but there was a slight flush upon his cheek and an expression of anxiety in his eye as he waited Evelyn's answer, nor were either of these diminished when he heard it.

"I told Mr. Irving that you had voluntarily acquainted me with your religious sentiments, but he wished me to ask what were your views in relation to marriage."

There was a slight pause during which Evelyn did not dare to raise her eyes, before Euston Hastings answered, "I did not know Mr. Irving had so much subtlety—that he could exercise such ingenuity in his malice, Evelyn—but with all his subtlety he has not penetrated into your pure and noble soul as I have, love. He does not know that this soft heart, which flutters like a prisoned bird beneath my hand, is companioned by a mind too expansive for narrow creeds or childish prejudices. I answer you with confidence, because I know, such is your affinity with purity and truth, that you will discover them though they appear in forms which conventionalism condemns; and I tell you without disguise, as Mr. Irving believed I would, that I think marriage unnecessary to secure fidelity where there is love, and insufficient where there is not. Do you think, dear Eva, that the promise made to a man who has been decorated with a certain dress and called a priest, will be more binding on us than those which we have made to each other, when all else on earth was forgotten,—or that I shall love you better for having stood beside you in a building, which they call a church, and told others that you were dear to me? No, Evelyn; for your sake—because a

false system of society would frown on you, if you were mine without this form—do I submit to its mockery; but I acknowledge to you that the delicacy of my love is offended by unveiling itself to other eyes than these dear ones;" and Euston Hastings gently touched with his lips the drooping lids of Evelyn's eyes.

A faint smile passed over her lip, but her eyes were still downcast, for such sophistry could neither convince the understanding, nor awaken in the heart that glad spring of emotion which follows the removal of a painful doubt respecting one we love. Yet when Euston Hastings asked if she were satisfied, or if Mr. Irving's insidious question had sundered their hearts, the hand which she placed in his—the glance which for an instant met his earnest gaze, seemed to leave him no cause for apprehension. There was doubtless a secret fear lurking in the depths of Evelyn's heart, but how could she venture to express that which would have proved to her lover that her intellect was less expansive, or her affinity with purity and truth less close than he thought? Accustomed to test every thing by the approbation of those she loved, her own true instincts were now regarded as narrow prejudices, to be concealed with care.

Spring flowers were in Evelyn's bridal bouquet, and the chill mornings and evenings still rendered fires necessary, when Euston Hastings led her to Beresford Hall—his wife; for so easily did his strong will—guided by the single aim, his own pleasure—mould all to his wishes, that in less than a month from Mr. Beresford's first acquaintance with his love for his daughter, he stood with her before God's holy altar, and pronounced those vows which were, from him, a mockery. At Evelyn's earnest entreaty, Mary accompanied her to the altar. A gay crowd surrounded her. All eyes in that crowd were fixed on the dark face of Euston Hastings, —generally so cold and grave, now lighted up by a proud,

triumphant joy,—and on the lovely creature at his side; but even while Mary looked upon them, a far different vision rose before her,—a vision of a lonely exile wandering from land to land, with no aim, no hope save forgetfulness.

Everard Irving had not been seen by any of Mr. Beresford's family since his last agitating interview with Evelyn. A week after that interview Mary sent a note to the hotel at which he had his rooms, making some unimportant inquiry a veil to her real object—her desire to hear from him. Her messenger brought back the note, "Mr. Irving had left the city." This was all her information till the day before Evelyn's marriage, when a box, containing Mr. Manelli's painting of the Death of Socrates, was left at Mr. Beresford's, with a letter from Everard Irving to her, requesting her acceptance of it as a parting present from him.

"When you receive this," he wrote, "I shall already have sailed for England. Whither I shall go, how long I shall stay, or whether I shall ever return, are questions which I cannot answer. I have but one desire—forgetfulness. In pursuit of this I hasten away. I cannot promise to write even to you, Mary, kind as you have been to me, for you are linked with the scenes I would forget. Think of me as of the dead, if you think of me at all. Adieu."

"Unkind Everard! Thou forbiddest me even to sorrow with thee—at least thou canst not prevent my praying for thee," was the language of Mary's heart, when she read this letter.

Mary longed to escape from New York. The associations of her life there were all painful, and these temporary and accidental circumstances so weighed upon her spirit, that they pressed it down, from the region of infinite truth and beauty, into their own sphere. She could not sympathize with the joy that was around her, not only because the shadow of the deserted and banished Everard darkened her

soul, but because she saw in Evelyn but a beautiful vi decked for sacrifice. True, she now held to her lips most intoxicating draught. She loved with all the rom devotion of a young, warm heart, and her life was nouri every moment by the passionate tenderness of the obje that love. Clasped in his arms, lighted by his looks of she danced gayly on her flowery path—forgetful of the heedless of the future. Even Mr. Beresford appeare have no perception but for his Evelyn's joyous tones looks; while Mary remembered that Euston Hastings an unbeliever and a libertine, and shuddered at the clouds which hung over her friend's future, and which feared veiled an abyss of anguish.

At her solicitation, Mr. Beresford consented that should return to Baltimore, and even accompanied thither himself, but a few days after Evelyn's marriage.

CHAPTER X.

"Bright one! oh, there well may be
Trembling midst our joy for thee."

HEMANS.

IF the first few months of Evelyn's wedded life were not cloudless, neither were they without many sunny hours. Eight weeks, passed in the retirement of Beresford Hall, had realized all her dreams of bliss. Euston Hastings, her husband, still remained her lover, finding an ever-varying charm in calling forth the timid manifestations of her almost idolatrous devotion to him. Just as he was beginning to feel the first approach of *ennui* in his quiet life, a letter was received by him from Mrs. Mabury, which informed him that she was at Saratoga with Monsieur and Madame L'Egaré, and a party of friends who had accompanied them from the South.

"What do you think of a trip to Saratoga, Eva?" he asked, smilingly, as he finished reading this letter, and refolding it, placed it in his pocket-book. "Mrs. Mabury is there."

"I would rather stay at home," answered Evelyn, reflecting his smile.

"Would you?—then I shall set out to-morrow, for if you do not go, I shall need no time for preparation."

"And will you go without me?" asked Evelyn, while the color rose in her cheeks, and her heart swelled.

"What can I do, if you would rather stay at home? You would not have me insist on your going, would you?" asked

Euston Hastings, playfully. "I value freedom too much myself to take it from my Eve," he added, as he drew her to his knee. He would have kissed her, but Evelyn averted her face, and he continued—"Even in that you shall be free—you shall not kiss me unless you like it."

His gay nonchalance was more bitter to Evelyn than any harshness could have been; for indifference from those we love is far more intolerable than anger. She struggled to free herself from his light clasp. He looked with a careless smile upon her vain efforts, till he felt a tear upon his hand. In an instant his brow grew dark, and releasing her, he rose himself, and said sternly, "Evelyn, if you expect to bend me to your will by tears, you greatly mistake me; your smiles are much more powerful over me, and it is as well that you should learn at once that the effect of your tears will always be to drive me from you."

Evelyn, who had never before been addressed in a harsh tone,—whose lightest sorrow had always been tenderly soothed,—sobbed bitterly.

"Good-morning, Evelyn—I shall see you at dinner, and if you meet me with smiles, I shall only desire to know your wishes in order to gratify them, if it be possible."

His retreating steps, as he immediately left the room, fell painfully on Evelyn's ear. "But he is only trying me," she whispered to herself; "he will come back again—he cannot leave me thus."

A few minutes passed, and she heard a horse galloping rapidly away. She hastened to the window, and saw Euston Hastings riding off in the direction of the city. The hours between this and dinner were passed by Evelyn in alternations of feeling, produced by pride and tenderness—the first scarcely drying the tears upon her cheek before the last would cause them to flow afresh. When dinner was announced, her eyes were swollen and her dress in disorder.

She bathed her face in cold water, and hastily adjusting her dress, descended to the dining-room. Believing her father alone, she paused a moment at the door, to assume a cheerful air; but on opening the door, her eyes rested on Euston Hastings, and the forced smile at once vanished from her lips, and her brow became clouded as before. Euston Hastings looked steadily at her for a moment, and turned away without speaking, with a slight smile upon his lip. When the little party was seated at table, Mr. Beresford observed that there was unusual silence, and tried to begin conversation.

"How far did you ride?" he asked of Euston Hastings, after obtaining only monosyllabic replies to several questions addressed to Evelyn.

"To the city—where I think I shall return this afternoon —probably for the night," said Euston Hastings.

"For the night!" exclaimed Mr. Beresford, with surprise. "Are you going too, Evelyn?"

Evelyn could not answer; she felt that an effort to speak would only have caused a fresh burst of tears: perhaps Euston Hastings perceived it too, for he answered for her, "No—Evelyn will not go with me. I hoped she would prevent my going, but I see she thinks it cannot be avoided."

This was said very significantly, and Evelyn understood him; but self-control was an unpractised lesson with her, and she would in vain have striven to exercise it now. There was not a particle of sullenness in Evelyn's nature. She had never been for a moment displeased by a friend without being ready to throw herself on the loved one's bosom, and give and take the kiss of reconciliation; but friendly arms must be held out to her, and gentle words and looks must woo her to them. Now, the indifference which had wounded her was unatoned for, unexcused, in-

creasingly manifest; for while her hands trembled, her color rapidly flushed and faded, and she was scarce able to repress her tears even in presence of the servants, Euston Hastings became suddenly talkative, and entertained Mr. Beresford with easy gayety, while, though not addressing Evelyn, he was observant of every courteous attention to her. Amused as Mr. Beresford was by his animated descriptions and gay sallies, they could not wholly divert him from the observation of Evelyn's evident agitation, and as soon as the servants had withdrawn, he put his arm around her as she sat near him, and said tenderly, "My poor Eva! have you been weeping all the morning because Mr. Hastings must leave you again?"

Evelyn dropped her head upon her father's shoulder, and sobbed aloud, unable to resist the influence of that sympathy for which she would not ask. With all his indulgence for Evelyn, Mr. Beresford felt such sorrow to be greatly disproportioned to the cause which he supposed to have excited it, and he would have made some apology to Euston Hastings for her folly, but when he looked up to do so, he was not in the room, having withdrawn from it at the moment of Evelyn's first outburst of emotion. Bending caressingly over Evelyn, he said to her very tenderly, "My dear daughter, a woman's tears are the most trying of all things to a man of feeling. Mr. Hastings will be very unhappy if he finds you so miserably agitated by such slight causes. For his sake you must endeavor to control this excessive sensibility. Hark! I hear his step in the library now—go to him there, Eva, and show him that you can command yourself. Come, let me wipe away your tears, and see you smile, before you leave me."

Evelyn had wept herself into something like composure, and she smiled, though faintly, on her father.

"That's my good girl—now go," said he encouragingly;

but Evelyn still hung upon him, and passing his arm around her, he led her to the library door, and disengaging himself from her, tapped gently upon it, and passed on.

"Walk in," cried Euston Hastings, but Evelyn had not courage to turn the latch and enter. He approached the door. Evelyn's heart sank lower with every footfall. The door was open, yet she stood still with downcast eyes.

"Come in, Evelyn, if you wish to speak to me," he said gently, but coldly.

Evelyn entered, but neither raised her eyes nor spoke. Taking out his watch, he looked at it and said, "I am sorry to hurry you, Evelyn, but I have little time to spare if I go to the city this evening—pray let me hear what you have to say."

"I cannot speak to you while you are so cold, so distant," murmured Evelyn.

"I told you this morning, Evelyn, that your tears would drive me from you, yet you made no effort to restrain them, as the face with which you met me at dinner plainly showed."

"How could I help weeping when you left me—left me in anger!"

She raised her eyes to his, and the next instant her head was resting on his bosom. He did not repulse her, yet neither did he respond to her embrace.

"Only love me, and I will promise never to weep again," whispered Evelyn, while her lip again quivered, and the tears against which she was vowing, lay glittering in her eyes.

He looked down on her—a smile dawned on his face, and clasping her to him, he said, "You are a spoiled child, and I must bear with you, I suppose."

"And you will not go to Saratoga and leave me?" and Evelyn looked up to him with eyes bright with her happiest smiles.

"Artful like all your sex," said he, while lavishing caresses on her—"the moment of reconciliation is that in which you expect to have every thing conceded; but I must go to Saratoga, Eva. I will not leave you, however, if you will go too—will you?"

"I will go anywhere with you."

"Yet you said this morning you would rather stay at home."

"It would not be home unless you stayed too."

"Foolish child!" he called her, yet still he smiled on her, and Evelyn was happy.

"You will never look coldly on me again," said she softly, as he murmured tender words in her ear.

"Nay—nay, Eva—taking advantage of me again! why you are an arrant intriguer—but I will make no promises. I love you very, very much, my Eva, but I love my freedom yet more, and you must leave me at liberty—wholly at liberty—if you would retain your power over me, and always remember that I consider tears a direct attack on my freedom, and will escape from them if I can."

The morning had scarcely been a period of greater agitation to Evelyn, than the afternoon of this day was to her father.

"My poor Eva! her happiness has been brief indeed," he repeated often to himself.

He thought not of blaming Euston Hastings—he remembered how often tears had stood on his own Evelyn's cheek when he would have coined his blood into gold to gratify her lightest wish, and he pitied Euston Hastings almost as much as he did himself or Evelyn. It was with trembling anxiety that he waited their appearance at the tea-table. They came, and he saw in a moment that the storm had passed away for the present. Evelyn's face was radiant with joy, and its radiance was reflected from

that of Euston Hastings. The intended visit to Saratoga was announced this evening, and nothing occurred in the few days before their separation to reawaken his anxiety for Evelyn's peace.

Evelyn soon felt that even with Euston Hastings at her side, she was little *at home* in the gay crowds of Saratoga, while Mrs. Mabury, eminently fitted for such a scene, seemed there more beautiful, more fascinating than ever. Her society had never been so delightful to Euston Hastings. Once again he found himself with a companion for his subtle intellect, and his world-encrusted heart. With her he resumed those half-revelations of feeling—those philosophico-sentimental conversations which would have suited little the clear, transparent mind of Mr. Beresford, or the childlike, sportive, all-confiding Evelyn. To these conversations Evelyn could scarcely be called a listener, though she was often present at them, feeling no want of companionship with Euston Hastings, while seated at his side, where she could turn her questioning eyes to his, if her opinion was asked either of a plan of amusement or on some graver subject, and where a kindly smile from him could occasionally show that she was not forgotten. Sometimes too, the conversation would assume a more common-place tone—subjects of a more general interest would be introduced, and an appeal would be made to her, more frequently by Mrs. Mabury than by Euston Hastings, and for the purpose, as Evelyn thought in after-times, of eliciting differences rather than similarities of sentiment.

"You have seen life under a new aspect since we parted,—I mean in your visit to the southern states. How did it impress you?" said Euston Hastings to Mrs. Mabury.

"Delightfully," she replied, "I found there the spring

of the poets;—all my senses were gratified, for the woods were wreathed with jessamines and carpeted with violets, sweet perfumes were ever floating around me, and the mocking-birds made the air vocal with their rich melody."

"But sights and sounds and odors, scarcely give us an idea of life—you must have gone deeper than these in your two months' residence there. Tell me of the people—I have heard that they were not so enterprising as the people on this side of the Potomac, that there was less immigration amongst them, and I have supposed therefore that society was not so completely in its transition state, that it had acquired more consistency, a more distinctive character."

"You are right."

"And what is that character?"

"Tell me your speculations respecting it, and I will tell you if they are correct."

"I have supposed that they had a great deal of the indolent, dreamy *poco-curantism* of the Italians."

"They have—but it is mingled with a great deal of French vivacity and impulsiveness; and at the base of both, lies no small measure of the mastiff-like resolution of old England."

"It seems a singular medley, yet I think I can trace its causes in their ancestry, their climate, and their peculiar social institutions."

"If you want an illustration of my meaning, the lady who is sitting alone at that farther window will furnish me with one. See how listlessly, with what a dreamy air she lounges in that Spanish chair. Could any Italian have seemingly a better appreciation of the *dolce far niente?* yet a proposal for a party of pleasure or an appeal to her generous emotions, would be like a spark to gunpowder—she would be all alive in an instant, wild with gayety or

energetic in feeling and action; and I assure you I do not know a more resolute person in the support of her own opinions and principles."

"Then you think I should not find another Italy at the south?"

"No, neither in the climate nor in the social aspect of life—there is more variableness in the one, more activity in the other."

"Italy for me then—it is the land of enjoyment without labor. For one who feels as I do the brevity of life—the worthlessness of those aims which bound themselves to our present horizon, and the absurdity of those which would pass beyond it, there is no land like Italy; for there pleasure flows in on us through every sense without a struggle or a care. I shall return there yet."

"What do you say to that, Evelyn?" asked Mrs. Mabury.

"To visiting Italy?—I should be delighted with it."

"With a visit, doubtless—but if it is to be your home?"

Evelyn's eyes had turned to Euston Hastings, and with the rose in her cheek deepening to crimson, she answered, "All lands are alike to me."

"'With thee, love,' your eyes added," said Mrs. Mabury, with a laugh which, silvery and graceful as it was, brought a yet richer glow into Evelyn's face, and somewhat annoyed Euston Hastings.

"You must teach your eyes more discretion, Eva," Mrs. Mabury added, "if you would not figure in a new comedy of 'The Honey-moon,' or see yourself displayed in the frontispiece of some magazine as '*L'épouse amoreuse*, a correct likeness of the beautiful Mrs. E. H.'—for here we have both authors and painters in search of subjects."

Evelyn was too timid, too fearful of ridicule to hear such raillery unmoved, or to reply to it as it deserved. Too

delicate to offend the most fastidious by a display of her affection for her husband, it had yet diffused its spirit over her every look and movement, and Euston Hastings had felt all the charm of her enhanced beauty, and of that varying manner in which his own changing moods were faithfully mirrored. Now, her graceful freedom of action was lost. Those soft eyes, lighted by love so pure,

> "——— That from their ray
> Dark vice would turn abashed away,"

no longer sought his with gentle confidence; and her manner became constrained into a very unimpressive equanimity. In the mean time, Mrs. Mabury devoted herself to him as to a valued friend from whom she had been long separated;—often deserting the bevy of admirers, whom her remarkable style of beauty, her captivating manners and uncommon conversational powers, attracted around her, for a *tête-à-tête* with him, either in a corner of the crowded saloon, or in a stroll on the piazza. Evelyn often stole from Madame L'Egaré and the little coterie into which she had drawn her, to her own room, and there Euston Hastings sometimes found her, and lingered an hour with her, while Mrs. Mabury was resting after a long walk or preparing for dinner. In such hours Evelyn was perfectly happy.

"When shall we go home?" she asked of him in one of these interviews,—"I long to be there once more."

"I thought all places were alike to you," he answered smilingly.

"Only when *with thee, love,*" said Evelyn, playfully, yet with girlish diffidence hiding her eyes on his shoulder.

"And are you not with me, now?"

"Now—this moment—but the next, perhaps—"

"The next you may be with me too, if you will; for I

have promised Mrs. Mabury to sing with her, and I want you to applaud me."

When Evelyn descended to the saloon with Euston Hastings, she found Mrs. Mabury there, the centre of a little group of curious idlers, whom the sound of her harp-strings, as she tuned them, had drawn thither. Those whom curiosity had brought, were enchained by delight as Euston Hastings and Mrs. Mabury sang. The sweet sounds attracted other listeners, and amongst them Signor Fantocci, an Italian professor of music, who had come to Saratoga with the hope of finding some employment for his powers, at a time when the city was a profitless field. The signor was loud in his praises.

"But do not some of these other ladies sing my country's beautiful songs? Your lady, does she not sing, sir?" he asked of Euston Hastings.

"She sings, and sweetly too," he answered, glancing at Evelyn; "but her voice is not powerful enough for Italian music—simple ballads suit her best."

"Excuse me, Mr. Hastings, for differing from you," said Miss Howard, the young lady from the South to whom Mrs. Mabury had once directed his attention as an illustration of southern character,—"I think Mrs. Hastings has voice enough for any music; what she wants is courage to give her voice free scope."

Euston Hastings did not like the lady's tone, and a cold bow was his only reply.

Miss Howard was a woman of ardent temperament, possessing at twenty-four all the enthusiasm of sixteen,—an enthusiasm which her knowledge of the world had directed without repressing. She had never been attracted, as most others were, by Mrs. Mabury. She admired her beauty, her talents, her tact,—but she said to her friends, "She wants nature—she is too artificial." To Evelyn, on the

contrary, her heart had opened at once. She had sought her acquaintance, and amused many an hour that would otherwise have passed heavily to Evelyn, with descriptions of her home, and its peculiar modes of life. Having more decided opinions than Evelyn on matters of conduct, she had, perhaps, felt more for her than she had yet done for herself on the subject of Mrs. Mabury's monopoly of Euston Hastings. This had given a certain tone to her praise of Evelyn's musical abilities, which was not altogether pleasing to him.

As he turned away from her to propose another song to Mrs. Mabury, she said to Evelyn, "I have a little plot, in which you must assist me."

"Willingly, if I can," replied Evelyn; "what is it?"

"Step aside here, and speak lower—it is a secret. Your husband has piqued me. I must prove to him that I am right in my judgment of your powers, and this I am sure I can do, if you will consent to take lessons of Signor Fantocci."

Evelyn hesitated, and said in an embarrassed manner—"Mr. Hastings will think me so vain, for fancying myself equal to Italian music."

"But Mr. Hastings is to know nothing about it—at least, not at present. Do not shake your head till you have heard my plan. We will take my mother into our confidence—you shall take your lessons quite privately in one of our apartments; and when you have mastered the most difficult of Signor Fantocci's bravuras, we will invite Mr. Hastings to one of our concertos, and astonish him by a discovery of your attainments."

Evelyn no longer objected—in truth, the little plot was delightful to her, and she readily promised to do all in her power for its successful accomplishment, provided Miss Howard could secure her mother's countenance, and Signor

Fantocci's services and secrecy. These were easily obtained, and Evelyn, the morning after this conversation, commenced her lessons. We have said that music was a passion with her, and that her voice had been highly cultivated, though not in this particular style. Her voice had been thought, by more than Euston Hastings, to want power; but this was because the ballad-music, which she preferred, seldom demanded force. Now, with an almost unconscious rivalry of Mrs. Mabury, she put forth all her powers; and her first hour's practice delighted her friends, and drew forth the most extravagant commendations from Signor Fantocci. In a week Miss Howard would have made her experiment on Euston Hastings, but the fearful Evelyn pleaded for yet another week's delay.

"I cannot make the attempt before Mr. Hastings till I am quite sure of success. I must sing his favorite song at least as well as Mrs. Mabury before he hears me," she said, with a laugh which belied her heart's earnestness.

Miss Howard would scarcely have consented to this delay, had not Evelyn's wishes been supported by the opinion of the friend to whose matured and sober, yet cheerful mind, she referred every important question of her own life—her mother.

"Mrs. Hastings is right, my dear," said Mrs. Howard to her impatient daughter. "I too should be sorry to have Mr. Hastings hear her till she is quite equal to Mrs. Mabury. Indeed, with her sensitiveness, I shall tremble for her first experiment even then. I wish he could hear her without her own knowledge."

"That would indeed be capital—and why can it not be so? I can take Mrs. Hastings and the signor into the inner room, and you can invite Mr. Hastings here. The only difficulty will be to keep that Mrs. Mabury from coming with him; but you can accomplish it, I am sure."

Mrs. Howard smiled at her daughter's enthusiasm, but did not refuse her aid in the little plot.

A few days after this conversation, Miss Howard invited Evelyn and Signor Fantocci into the inner room, saying her mother was expecting a visiter who might interrupt their proceedings. Their little concerto proceeded as usual. Evelyn accompanied herself on the guitar, which, with a few directions from the signor, had become quite an effective instrument in her hands. Miss Howard seemed rather *distrait* at first, as if she listened with a divided mind. At length a step was heard in the outer room, and Mrs. Howard's voice uttered a few sentences in somewhat suppressed tones. Miss Howard immediately recovered all her powers of attention.

"Now, Evelyn!" she exclaimed, "let us have Mr. Hastings' favorite."

Evelyn complied, and unembarrassed by any agitating emotion, gave forth her rich, clear, round voice, in all its power. The signor sang with her.

"Encore—encore!" exclaimed Miss Howard, as they concluded; "but solo now, Evelyn, and do your best."

Evelyn, with a playful remonstrance on her friend's unreasonable exactions, complied with her request. Her voice, now soft and low, sank into the heart's depths, awakening its sleeping passions, and now rose full and clear, up, up, bearing the soul of the hearer on the wings of song. As she commenced the second stanza, a deep-toned voice—not Signor Fantocci's—accompanied hers. She turned to look for the singer with thrilling nerves, for she thought there was but one such voice, and there, beside her chair, stood Euston Hastings. She had paused in her song, but he continued singing, smiling pleasantly upon her, and again she joined him. There was a slight tremor at first perceptible in her tones, but it was not sufficient to mar their effect, for

his smile and the expression of his eyes had silenced all apprehensions.

"Bravo, Evelyn!" he exclaimed, as she concluded. "I never heard that better sung, even in Italy;—but what inspired you with such a happy thought as applying to Signor Fantocci, who certainly deserves great credit for your instruction?"

The signor was not the least pleased of the party. He bowed again and again in reply to the compliment of Euston Hastings, and said, "Ah, sare! it was you inspire the happy thought. You praise Mrs. Maberri, and it make *vestra signora* jealous—jealousy inspire her."

The red blood rushed impetuously to the dark brow of Euston Hastings, and he darted an almost fierce glance at Evelyn. Fortunately, she did not perceive it, but her friend Miss Howard did, and hastened to avert the threatened storm.

"You must study the niceties of our language, signor," she said to the Italian. "You say Mrs. Hastings was jealous, but that is not what you mean—you should say she was emulous."

"Emulous—what is that?"

"That she was anxious to do as well as Mrs. Mabury, and setting her delightful singing up as her model, would not be satisfied till she had equalled it."

"Ah!—yes—that was it—emulous—I thank you to tell me how I should say it."

His thanks were a less pleasing reward to Miss Howard than the restored serenity of Euston Hastings' countenance, and his evident pleasure in Evelyn's exercise of what was to him a new gift. He sang with her again and yet again, complimented Miss Howard on her true appreciation of her powers, and at last expressed the wish that Mrs. Mabury could hear her. Mrs. Howard requested that he would go in search of Mrs.

Mabury, and bring her there. Evelyn would have remonstrated against this, but he would not listen to her, and in a very few minutes Mrs. Mabury entered, leaning on his arm. Scarcely pausing to reply to the courteous salutations of Mrs. and Miss Howard, she exclaimed, "Pray, Eva, begin —I am impatient to hear this wonderful voice which your good fairy, Miss Howard, has bestowed on you."

There was something unpleasing to Evelyn in Mrs. Mabury's tone—especially in her pronunciation of the words "your good fairy, Miss Howard;" and more courageous for her friend than for herself, she replied, with a glow at her heart and on her cheek, "Miss Howard has been my kind, partial friend, and that sometimes proves as useful a character as a good fairy."

Mrs. Mabury listened to Evelyn's singing with smiles on her lips, and bitterness in her heart. For the first time something nearly approaching to dislike for her unconscious rival, threatened to take the place of the pity with which, we have said, she was regarded by her at the period of her first engagement with Euston Hastings;—a pity, the result of her conviction that Evelyn was wholly incapable of making any deep, enduring impression on his heart. As one wearied with gazing on bright colors and glowing lights, turns with pleasure to soberer tints and the cool shades, so might his jaded senses find enjoyment in the contemplation of her natural and simple grace and beauty. Her timid and yet impassioned nature had prepared for the refined sensualist a triumph greater than any which his varied life had brought him; but the triumph once achieved, and Mrs. Mabury believed that the artificial man of the world would soon need the excitement which could only be furnished by one as artificial as himself—one who could foresee each turning of that subtle mind, and that strange, inconstant heart. But now, she could set no limits to the

action of that power which had, in so short a time, so wonderfully developed Evelyn's powers of song. What latent qualities might not be called forth by this strong desire to please the object of her devoted affection; and would not these qualities acquire a new charm for Euston Hastings when regarded as a demonstration of his power? These thoughts, and the feelings they engendered, cast no shadow over the bright face of Mrs. Mabury, nor did she suffer her voice again to betray her; yet in her words, even while praising Evelyn, there was an assertion of superior taste which gave some indication of the truth.

"Your singing is perfection, Eva," she exclaimed, "but for Heaven's sake, my love, never again accompany such music with the tinkling guitar—they are wholly out of harmony."

Euston Hastings smiled,—for he caught a glimpse of Mrs. Mabury's heart, and though a suspicion of jealousy in his wife would have aroused his utmost anger, in his fair friend it awakened softer emotions.

Mrs. Howard saw her daughter's eye kindling, and hastened to forestall any inconsiderate remark from her, by saying to Mrs. Mabury, with a frank and courteous manner, "You have not my inconstancy of taste. When I heard your harp, I thought no instrument comparable with it; and now I am ready to pronounce Mrs. Hastings' guitar the most delightful of all accompaniments for a sweet voice."

CHAPTER XI.

"April clouds that quickly pass
In shade and sunshine o'er the grass,
But imitate on field and furrow
Life's fitful scenes of joy and sorrow."

SCOTT.

AT the period of which we write, the choice of conveyances in travelling lay between the lumbering stage-coach and the private equipage. The rapid rail-car has now nearly displaced both of these. This vehicle is in striking unison with the democratic tendencies of our age and country. The long-descended master of many a fertile acre—the lady reared amid costly luxuries, may now arrive at Saratoga, side by side with the fortunate mechanic and the pretty milliner, who have won by unusual diligence some days or weeks of leisure; and if the last have been, as many of their class in our favored country are, well-educated,—if they possess the native refinement monopolized by no condition, they may enjoy for a time all those honors and attentions supposed to wait on rank and wealth. The gentleman will never dream that the fair hand which he touches so respectfully in the dance, has ever been engaged in the manufacture of caps and bonnets,—nor will the lady suspect that the witty remarks which drew her attention from her own party to her *vis-à-vis* at table, were made by one conversant with all the mysteries of the plane, the chisel, and the hammer. Not thus was it in those "good old times" to which, despite our reasons, our hearts look

reverently and tenderly back. Then, the travellers by the stage-coach looked from a distance admiringly, envyingly, or with a sort of defiant pride, according to their various tempers, on those arriving in their own carriages. Among these last none boasted a more elegant equipage than Euston Hastings, but in one thing Mrs. Mabury surpassed him. One of her outriders had ridden her own saddle-horse, with whose beauty nothing at Saratoga could compete,—and day after day she was seen in the habit and riding-cap which so well became her, mounted on her noble Selim, and accompanied by parties of ladies and gentlemen, amongst whom she moved a queen, or escorted by one gentleman only, and that one, generally, Euston Hastings. A week or more of very dry and sultry weather, in the latter part of July, was succeeded in the early days of August by heavy showers. All in-door amusements had been tried, and all had ceased to please before the sun again looked invitingly forth. Never was invitation more joyfully accepted than his, when it was vouchsafed. The earth was green, the skies bright, the roads firm, the woods were full of spicy odors, the birds were fluttering their many-colored, newly-washed wings, and singing their most joyous songs.

Not more joyous were they than seemed the riders, male and female, who came forth once more, after many days' imprisonment, into the free air. They entered a road winding through deep woods, which soon resounded with their cheerful calls and their gay laughter. They were overflowing with spirits, and eager for adventure; but nothing promised to gratify this desire, for the road was plain and smooth, and even the simultaneous spurring and checking of some very young gentlemen could elicit nothing more than a few graceful caracoles from their well-trained steeds. At length they reached a point where a rough

cart-road diverged from the one they were pursuing, and some of the party proposed entering it. It looked inviting with its green sod, over which no wheels seemed to have passed for months, and with the trees on either side forming an arch over it, through which the sun could only here and there send a ray, looking all the brighter for the surrounding shadow. They entered it, not in the wide phalanx in which they had hitherto rode, for here, from the broken character of the ground, only two riders could pass abreast. Euston Hastings and Mrs. Mabury led the way, followed next by Evelyn and Monsieur L'Egaré. They cantered briskly forward for about half a mile, when a sudden turn of the road brought them in view of a stone wall, from three to four feet high. The foremost riders paused, and the others pressed forward to learn the reason of the unexpected halt.

"Provoking! Is there no way of getting around it? The road looks more tempting still beyond," cried several voices.

"There is a way of getting over it. My Selim will never turn back from such a mere bagatelle as yonder wall," said Mrs. Mabury, passing her hand caressingly through the mane of the beautiful animal which arched his neck and backed his ears, as if proudly conscious of her praises.

"Come on then, Estelle! We will lead the way," cried Euston Hastings, gazing admiringly on her spirited countenance, while Evelyn, a timid rider herself, heard the proposal and its acceptance with undisguised terror.

"Oh no—no! you will not go—you are jesting, I am sure: are you not?" she exclaimed, appealing to both with a forced smile.

"Mr. Hastings may be jesting, but I am not, I assure you. I mean to pursue that road and discover the secret

which the trees in that mysterious wood seem to be whispering to each other," answered Mrs. Mabury, gayly.

"But *you* will not go—for my sake you will not do any thing so wild—so mad," urged Evelyn to her husband, as she drew near to his side.

"You are foolish, and are making yourself ridiculous," said he in an angry tone, and moving off from her.

Had Evelyn been wise, she would have ceased her importunities, but when was love, impassioned love, wise?

Wheeling her horse almost directly across his path, she laid her hand upon his, and said with a vain attempt at playfulness, "You must not go—I shall not permit it!"

His brow grew red, and throwing off her hand, he seized her bridle, and pushing her horse forcibly back from his path, put spurs to his own, and dashed forward. In another instant he had cleared the wall, while Evelyn sat gazing on him with clasped hands, dilated eyes, and lips apart.

"Come on," he called to Mrs. Mabury, "your Selim will bear you over it like a bird."

"He shall try at least," she replied, and striking her horse with the small riding-whip she carried, she urged him to his utmost speed. Fast—faster onward rushed the beautiful horse, and his more beautiful rider. They have reached the barrier, and rising lightly, they bound gracefully over it, and turning immediately, stand side by side with Euston Hastings, and facing the group of admiring but less adventurous riders. Evelyn sees her husband safe, and yet there is a sharper pang at her heart than at the moment when she trembled for his life, for she sees the playful smiles upon his lip,—she catches the glance of tender admiration directed to his fair friend, and she contrasts with them the scornful curve of the lip, the dark,

scowling brow, so lately turned on her, and she feels for the first time—alas! not the last—jealousy's keen dart.

Mrs. Mabury waved her hand in adieu, and gayly assured the party she had left, that she would bring them a true and full account of her discoveries, as she wheeled her horse to follow the already receding figure of Euston Hastings. The winding and wooded path which they pursued soon hid them from the gaze of their late companions, who turned with somewhat lowered spirits to regain the main road. The light cloud soon passed from other minds, but over Evelyn's it settled lower and grew darker every moment. As she came, none had been more joyous. Her gayety of heart had burst forth in sportive words, in the light laugh which,

> "——— Without any control,
> But the sweet one of gracefulness rang from her soul,"

and sometimes in a few "wood-notes wild," warbled forth in an imitation which her nice ear made singularly exact, of the birds carolling around her. Now, laugh and song and sportive words were hushed, and she rode silently on with passionate and bitter thoughts in her heart, lying too deep, too undefined, perchance, for language, yet expressed clearly enough to an observing eye, in her flushed cheeks and the strange compression of her usually flexile lips.

The glow of sunset had faded into the dimness of twilight, when the somewhat wearied party returned home. Evelyn lingered behind her companions for a few seconds, that she might ask of the groom who had approached to take her horse, whether Mr. Hastings had returned. He had not.

Two hours after, Evelyn still remained alone in her dimly-lighted room. She no longer wept as she had done when she first sought its retirement; but having exchanged her habit for a muslin wrapper, she sat in gloomy stillness near

an open window, looking out upon the darkness, and peopling its void with the sombre visions of her jealous fancy. At length her heart bounded to the quick tread of horses' feet. They were coming. She could not distinguish their forms or features; but there was no mistaking the voice that met her ear as they passed just beneath her window, nor the gay, careless laugh which rang out so softly, yet so joyously on the still air. The voice was that of Euston Hastings, the laugh was Mrs. Mabury's.

Reader! hast thou ever, in thy hour of darkness, caught the light words or tones or looks of one held as the better part of thy own being, and felt a sudden pang shoot across thy heart at the thought—"We are divided?" If so, thou canst divine how Evelyn, the sensitive Evelyn, felt at this moment, and thou wilt not wonder that she should have forgotten the many wise resolves, made in the last hour, to conceal within her heart's deepest recess emotions which could only offend where she most desired to please. Could she have heard those words!

"Poor Eva! See, she sits alone there, watching for us. I fear I was a little harsh to her this afternoon."

"And now you are beginning to dread her wife-like reception—'How dost thou Benedict the married man?'" and then rang out that graceful laugh.

"My Eva is no Beatrice—thank Heaven! and if she sometimes wear a clouded brow, I have a charm by which I can bring back all her smiles at will."

"I will go with you, and see you use it—I may need such a charm myself one day."

In a few minutes Evelyn's straining ear caught light footfalls near her door, and then the quick, decided tap upon its panel which always heralded *his* coming.

"Come in," she cried;—but the opening door showed her that Euston Hastings was not alone.

In Evelyn's present mood Mrs. Mabury's visit seemed an insult, and a brighter light would have shown the kindling of her eyes, the flushing of her pale face, and the sudden erection of her drooping form, as resentful pride overmastered her sadness. She rose from her chair, but neither advanced towards her visiter nor spoke.

"I think you will need your charm," whispered Mrs. Mabury to Euston Hastings; then passing into the room, she said, "I must keep our adventures for another occasion, Eva: neither of us have any time to spare, if we would grace ——'s ball-room on this his gala-night—"

"Pray do not let me detain you a moment—I assure you—"

"One moment more—I only want to present Mr. Hastings to you untouched in life and limb, and entreat you to forgive me for leading him away a few hours from his liege lady."

"Mr. Hastings is his own master—I have—"

"No time to talk now, Evelyn," said Euston Hastings, interrupting her impatiently. "Make your toilette quickly, Estelle, and we will call for you on our way down. Shine forth in all your brilliancy to-night for ——'s sake. To-night begins the war between the rival houses of Ballston and Saratoga."

"I am gone. Pray that my charms may be more successful than yours has proved."

Mrs. Mabury was already beyond the door when these last words were pronounced, and Euston Hastings closed it without replying to them. Lighting a candle, he went to his dressing-room in perfect silence, and only after he had entered it looked out again to say, "I shall be ready in half an hour, Evelyn."

"I do not intend going down to-night," Evelyn replied.

In half an hour Euston Hastings appeared again, dressed

with his usual unostentatious elegance. Evelyn expected, perhaps she hoped, that he would use some persuasion to induce her to accompany him, but he did not. Then and ever, he acted in the spirit he had avowed,—allowing to her the same uncontrolled liberty he demanded for himself.

"You will probably be asleep, Evelyn," he said, "before I leave the ball-room to-night. You will oblige me if you will order a bed made up for me on the cot in my dressing-room. I can enter it by the outer door, and so I shall not be restrained by the fear of awaking you. Good-night."

The words were said and he had passed from the room before Evelyn, surprised, agitated, could summon power to speak. This separation, this cold good-night, what did they portend? Her pride and her love were both in arms, and for hours, while the music of the distant ball-room told of joy and festivity, she sat weeping and upbraiding alternately her own folly and his indifference. At length the clock struck twelve, and she remembered that the bed he had asked was not yet made. She approached the bell, but turned irresolutely away. "Was the past irremediable?" she asked herself. "He was not unforgiving—he had taken her to his heart at her first expression of regret when last she angered him. Might it not be thus now, if she waited till he came, and sought a reconciliation with him? She should sleep so sweetly after receiving his kiss of peace."

Drawing a large well-stuffed chair near the door of his dressing-room, Evelyn seated herself there to await his coming. She listened for it till the time seemed to her to stretch out to hours, and then she slept—slept long and heavily—exhausted by her conflict of feeling. She was awakened by a sharp, crackling sound, and when fully aroused, she perceived that it came from the direction of

the dressing-room, and turning quickly thither, her eyes were dazzled by the glare of light visible beneath the door. Scarcely pausing to think, she threw open the door, and stood for a single second gazing on the almost maddening sight within. The candle which Euston Hastings had taken into his room had been carelessly left burning on a table too near the wall on which hung some light summer-clothing. This had taken fire, and the blazing fragments had, in falling, communicated the flame to the dry and matted floor. The flames had not yet risen to a great height, but they had spread nearly over the whole floor, forming a sea of fire between Evelyn and the cot on which Euston Hastings lay half undressed, as still and looking—by that lurid light and under the dun canopy of smoke which, driven inwards by the air from Evelyn's room, hung above him thickening every moment—well-nigh as pale as the dead. One cry of dismay only escaped Evelyn's lips. She had no fear, no thought for herself. "He is in danger,"—this was the thought which filled her heart and nerved her to exertion. *His* life depended upon her; for though hundreds were around her, they were probably sleeping, and before she could arouse them, all help might be unavailing for him. Strong in her love, the timid, shrinking Evelyn became a heroine, prompt in thought and bold in action. We have said that she stood but one instant looking at the sight which that opening door had disclosed; the next, gathering up the bedclothes, which fortunately the chill air of Saratoga rendered unusually heavy for the season, she cast them on the burning floor, and while the flames were for a moment smothered, rushed over them to the cot.

"Wake!—wake, Mr. Hastings!—oh! wake, or you will die!—oh God! have mercy on us! he will never wake."

Such were Evelyn's frantic cries, while every moment the flames came nearer, scorching, stifling her, yet Euston Has-

tings stirred not. A sigh, a groan from him, her own labored breathing told her at last that he was held by other bonds than those of sleep. That smoke—becoming denser at every breath, suffocating even to her who had been scarce a second within its influence—oh, for one single rush of air to sweep it from the room! Quick as the lightning's flash these thoughts had darted through her mind,—scarce slower was her movement, as bounding to the outer door over the already blackened and, in some spots, blazing covering, she threw it wide open, and sprang back upon the cot. Her feet were blistered, her dress was on fire, and as she threw herself beside Euston Hastings to smother the flame, her shrieks—"Fire! fire!—help! help—or he will die!" alarmed the occupants of the neighboring apartments, and aroused to entire consciousness Euston Hastings himself, whose lungs had been already relieved by the sudden rush of fresh air through his room. One glance around his room, one cry to the Heaven which the most infidel heart acknowledges at such a moment, and with that almost superhuman effort only possible to him who struggles for life, he started up, caught the slender form of Evelyn in his arms, and standing upon the cot, bounded from it through the now blazing doorway into the room beyond. There his power gave way, and staggering beneath his light burden to the bed, he sank with her upon it.

"Thank God! you are safe," murmured Evelyn.

"And saved by you, my Eva!"

His words fell on unconscious ears—Evelyn had fainted, and before she was restored to life and feeling the flames had been extinguished; and the first moment of returning consciousness showed her Euston Hastings bending over her, with his usually stern countenance softened to the expression of the most anxious tenderness, while he said in earnest, entreating tones, "Touch her gently—pray touch her gently."

She smiled upon him, though the next instant her brow was contracted by pain, as Miss Howard carefully applied the dressings, prepared by a physician who stood beside her, to the burns upon her feet.

For many days Evelyn could not stand, but these were among the happiest days of her life, for Euston Hastings was her tender and assiduous nurse, and her constant companion. It was he who lifted her from her bed to the couch near a window, on which she spent most of her waking hours. There he would sit beside her, reading to her, talking with her, and soothing her by tender words when the red spot upon her cheek marked an increase of pain and fever. Many friends visited her, but he rarely relinquished to any his seat at her side, and not even Mrs. Mabury's brightest smiles or most interesting vein of conversation could make him for a moment forgetful of her who had proved her devoted love for him at the peril of her life. Evelyn's exulting heart repeated to her again and again, "I have won him—he is mine, wholly mine at last;" and already forgetful of Him to whom she had cried in her agony, and who had shown himself to her a God of mercy, she asked no other heaven than the continuance of her present bliss. Fearful is it thus to make to ourselves idols of clay, and rest our every hope upon that broken reed—a human heart!

While Mrs. Mabury looked on these scenes with agony that found no expression in her proud eye, her gay tones, and sparkling manner, envying Evelyn the fiery ordeal through which she had attained such joy, and Miss Howard, with new hope for her friend, whispered to her mother, "He has a heart"—that mother, more experienced in life, trembled for the young stranger whose gentle and loving nature had excited an almost maternal interest in her kindly bosom.

CHAPTER XII.

"Alas! how light a cause may move
Dissension between hearts that love!"

MOORE.

EXPERIENCE is the best teacher, says the world, and so it has said for thousands of years, and yet we venture to dispute the maxim. Is that the best teacher which exposes our mistakes only when hope and energy are dead within us, and teaches us how to attain our desires only when earth holds no object that can kindle them?

Evelyn returned from Saratoga a proud and happy wife. Mr. Beresford's heart bounded with delight as he received her to his arms all smiles and brightness, with a gladness in her eyes such as he had rarely seen there, even in her joyous girlhood. Again the sleeping echoes of her early home were awakened by her song, or her scarce less musical laugh, and beside her was Euston Hastings, looking gentler and brighter, and Mr. Beresford thought younger, than of yore. A few weeks passed away thus, and again there fell a shadow on the brightness of Evelyn's life.

It was October, and New York was fast filling up with the thousands who had left it in the summer for cooler or gayer resorts. Mrs. Mabury had returned. She had left Saratoga before Euston Hastings and Evelyn, and had passed the intervening weeks in travel. She had visited Niagara, had persuaded her companions, Monsieur and Madame L'Egaré, to proceed to Buffalo, then almost in its infancy, and thence embarking on Lake Erie, to penetrate

with her the wilderness that lay upon its western shores. From this tour she had borne back a store of vivid description and amusing anecdote, which rendered her society more exciting than ever. She called at Beresford Hall soon after her arrival. Never had she seemed to Euston Hastings so brilliant. To him her conversation was like wine to the inebriate who has long forborne its exhilarating influence. He accepted the invitation which Evelyn declined, to accompany her to the city.

How sadly did Evelyn watch the setting sun that evening —how gloomy seemed the night as it darkened around her! It was late in the evening when Euston Hastings returned. An hour earlier Evelyn would have received him with a clouded brow, but in that hour a thousand apprehensions of danger or disaster had been conjured up by her timid fancy, and when he came, she forgot all other feelings in joy at his safety.

"I have brought an invitation for you from Mrs. Mabury to dine with her to-day, Eva," said Euston Hastings, as he laid aside the daily paper to welcome her to the library, the following morning after breakfast.

The smile with which she had entered, vanished from her lip as she replied—"I am much obliged to her, but I have engagements at home to-day."

"I am sorry for it, as I think we shall have a very agreeable party;" and Euston Hastings resumed his paper.

Evelyn sat beside him with a swelling heart.

In a few minutes he looked up to ask—"Evelyn, where would you prefer that I should take a house—in Broadway or —— Place?"

"A house! What do you want with a house?"

"To live in,—unless you would prefer rooms at a hotel for the winter. I am told there will be a greater number of vacant houses from which to choose our home in the spring.'

"I wish no other home than this."

Euston Hastings looked for a moment on her flushed face and quivering lip, and then replied in his usual firm, cold tone—"You are aware, Evelyn, of course, that I cannot much longer remain your father's guest; but in regard to your accompanying me, you can do as you please —I exact no sacrifices from you."

One large tear fell upon Evelyn's hand unheeded by her, but not unmarked by Euston Hastings, as she said, falteringly, with a voice choked by emotion, "I do not think I have shown myself averse to make them."

An almost involuntary movement of the foot which had suffered most in the fire at Saratoga, and which was still tender from its effects, gave point to this speech. The blood rose in a torrent to the brow of Euston Hastings, swelling and tightening the veins which crossed his temples, but he did not answer her till the crimson tide had retreated, leaving his face as pale and calm as usual. Then he said, in tones which told little of the tempest he had subdued —"You are not well versed in affairs of the heart, Evelyn, or you would have discovered that any attempt to assert a claim over it, even the claim of services rendered, but tempts it to resistance. As regards the house, I shall see the two houses that have been offered me to-day and select one of them, since you refuse to choose for me. By the first of November it will be ready for us, and I shall remove there. But again I tell you, I will exercise no force on your inclinations,—your rooms will be prepared for you there,—you can occupy them or not, as you please."

"Heartless and ungrateful!" burst from the excited Evelyn as Euston Hastings left the room, regardless of the sobs which his words had occasioned.

Euston Hastings heard her not. His horse, which he

had ordered before breakfast, was already in waiting when he left her, and mounting immediately, he set off at a rate which brought him in a very few minutes to the entrance of the city. Here he drew in his bridle, and gradually soothing the spirit he had himself excited, brought his horse to proceed at a pace less likely to attract attention to Mrs. Mabury's house in —— street. Early as it was, he found that lady surrounded by visiters, who were urging her to accompany them in the evening to the Park Theatre, where a company of ballet-dancers—the first importation of the kind from Europe—were to exhibit their art for the improvement of American taste.

"You have come in a happy moment," exclaimed Mrs. Mabury, extending her hand to him in welcome, "just in time to save me from what I dread of all things—a decision. Shall I go to see these people at the Park?"

"Why should you not?" asked Euston Hastings, in surprise.

"Because if I have a passion, it is for that poetry of motion which makes an attitude express so much to which we cannot or dare not give words. Do you not remember how Taglioni swayed my soul? I fear to see these people—I fear some gross caricature of her inimitable grace to shock my taste, and shadow my pleasing memories."

"Oh! go by all means," said Euston Hastings, "and I will go with you. These people are probably neither the best nor the worst of their kind, but I shall encourage them as a duty."

"A duty!—I do not understand," said a young gentleman of the party, with a puzzled look. Euston Hastings appeared not to hear him.

"Explain!" exclaimed Mrs. Mabury.

"At your command, certainly. I consider it my duty to do all I can to free my countrymen and countrywomen

from the tyranny exercised over them by the opinions and customs of their puritanical ancestors—a worse tyranny than any other in the world, for it enslaves the soul."

"I agree with you, sir," said the before-mentioned young gentleman; "those Puritans were the most contemptible, ridiculous, canting race."

"Excuse me, sir," said Euston Hastings, with the most punctilious politeness, "I am sorry to say I do not agree with you. The Puritans of America were the noblest race of men that ever existed. The customs and opinions to which I adverted, were no yoke to them, they were the free expression of their unfettered souls; but in their children, who have lost the deep religious faith from which those customs and opinions sprung, they would be either a miserable affectation, or a pitiable subjection to an intolerable tyranny."

"Hear, hear! Euston Hastings defending the Puritans! Is Saul among the prophets?" cried Mrs. Mabury, desirous of soothing the irritation of the discomfited young gentleman, who had just sufficient acuteness of perception to be aware that Euston Hastings had no great respect for his judgment; "but, *revenons à nos moutons*—that is, to the ballet-dancers," she continued; "Mr. Hastings has decided for me, that I go with you this evening, to aid in liberating my country from the despotism of opinion. Thank you for that," she added, turning to Euston Hastings with a graceful laugh, "I do like to find an exalted motive for an action to which I am inclined. It keeps me in such good humor with myself."

"Will not Mrs. Hastings join our party?" asked one lady.

"Pray, persuade her to accompany us, Mr. Hastings," urged another.

Euston Hastings bowed in silence to these overtures, and

only Mrs. Mabury saw the slight contraction of his brow, when first his wife was named. "Are you going for Evelyn?" she asked as soon as they were alone.

"No—I will send a note to her, and invite her to join me here, with your permission."

"Do so; and tell her to come prepared to spend the night here. It will be better than a sleepy drive to Beresford Hall."

Euston Hastings assented, and Mrs. Mabury left him to dress for morning visits. She paused at the door, however, to say, "You will dine with me of course; and Evelyn, if she can come in time."

"I make no engagements for her, but you may depend on me."

In a few minutes Euston Hastings had written and dispatched the following note:

"The ballet-dancers lately arrived from Europe, make their first appearance at the Park to-night. If you have any desire to witness their *debût*, come in as soon as you please after receiving this. Mrs. Mabury hopes to see you at dinner. At any rate, you must not be later than six o'clock, for as the novelty will probably attract a crowd, we shall go early. Mrs. Mabury advises your coming prepared to spend the night at her house. Should you not come, you will oblige me by sending Dixon in with my dressing-case and valise, as I shall in that case take a room at a hotel for the night. I hope, however, you will come yourself—*provided you come prepared to enjoy yourself, and to add to the enjoyment of others;* but I entreat you, Evelyn, for your own sake, as well as mine, bring with you no clouds.

"Yours,

"E. Hastings."

Evelyn had been left by Euston Hastings in the morning, in a tempest of emotion, such as she had never experienced before. His displeasure or his coldness had theretofore excited only grief, but now there was a sense of injustice in her heart, awakening an indignation which well-nigh overmastered sorrow. She had been accustomed to say in past times, "He thinks me but a silly child. Ah! if he knew the devotion that is in my heart—if he knew what I could dare for him!" And now he knew it all—had she not offered her life for his, and won him even from the very arms of death, acquiring thus an indefeasible right to his devotion; and how could she endure those cold and heartless words, which seemed to mock at her claim and deride her offering? The impassioned nature which Euston Hastings had read so early in the depths of her downcast eyes, was fully awakened, and she longed, with an impatience which would scarcely bear delay, for his coming, that she might pour forth all the wild utterance of her burning heart. Such was her state of feeling when his note was handed to her. With a trembling hand, and a cheek flushed with its own eager longings, she broke the seal, not doubting that she should find there a recantation of his cruel words. How like an ice-bolt did every sentence and line and word fall upon her heart! She threw the note from her, as she concluded reading it, and remained in perfect stillness, gazing from the window by which she sat, without seeing aught, and quite unconscious of the lapse of time, till her maid entered to ask if she would send an answer to the note, as the servant who had brought it was waiting. Her resolution was taken in a moment.

"Tell him he may go," she said. "I will be in the city myself this evening; and tell Dixon to prepare his master's dressing-case, and put up some linen for him in his valise, as he will probably remain in New York to-night."

"Are you going to stay too, ma'am?—will you want some things put up?"

"No; I shall sleep at home."

"I will leave him his boasted liberty—let him see whether it will requite him for the loss of love," she murmured, in her heart's depths. "Where is Mr. Beresford?" she continued aloud to the girl.

"In the library, I think, ma'am."

Unusually rapid in all her movements, Evelyn was in another moment at her father's side.

"Father, you must go with me to the city to-night, or come for me, if you like that better, to Mrs. Mabury's about ten o'clock."

"Must—and pray why must I, saucebox, give up my comfortable arm-chair at home for a night-drive? Where is your sworn vassal, Mr. Hastings?"

"Oh! he has something to do which will keep him in the city to-night, and I want to return home."

"And pray, why are you going? Does Mrs. Mabury give a party to-night?"

"No; Mr. Hastings wishes me to go to the theatre with him."

Evelyn colored, for she was conscious that she was not dealing quite honestly with her father, and passing quickly to another subject, she asked, "Will you go with me, father, or come for me?"

"Oh! I will go with you, since I *must* do one or the other; I hate solitary drives, especially by night. While you are at the theatre, I will look in upon some old friends."

Evelyn's toilette was made with unusual brilliancy, yet rapidly. Never had ambitious conqueror longed to find himself in presence of his foe, as she did to meet Euston Hastings, and enter on the conflict on which she had decided. He had told her that earth held for him nothing so

dear as her love—he should learn that it was possible to lose it. She would drive him from that cold self-possession which rose up against her passionate appeals like some iron rock against which the waves exhaust themselves in vain. Rash determination! Who could look at her even now, when passion had deepened every line of her fair face, inspiring it with strange power, and recall the dark, stern face of Euston Hastings, with its cold, thoughtful eyes, the haughty carriage of his head, the firm compression of his lips, without feeling that conflict between them must be destruction to her?

The clock was on the stroke of six, and Mrs. Mabury and Euston Hastings were sipping their coffee in her boudoir, when the servant announced Mrs. Hastings. Evelyn followed so closely on his steps that Mrs. Mabury, whatever had been her intention, was compelled to receive her there. There was a cold but bright smile on Evelyn's lip, and an unusual expression on her brow as she glanced around on entering; and the tone in which she said, "I am sorry to disturb so comfortable an arrangement," heightened the bloom on Mrs. Mabury's cheeks, and made Euston Hastings bite his lips with anger.

"You will stay with me to-night," said Mrs. Mabury, almost instantly recovering her self-possession.

"Thank you, but I have promised my father to return with him after the ballet."

"With him! Is Mr. Beresford here?"

"No; he came in with me, but is spending the evening with his old friends, the Delancys."

"Has Dixon sent what I desired?" inquired Euston Hastings.

"I presume so—I gave him your orders."

It was almost impossible to recognise Evelyn—the timid, tender Evelyn—in the self-possessed, nonchalant speaker.

A cup of coffee was brought to her, and she threw off her hood and opened the cloak, which the chill evening air had compelled her to assume.

"Heavens! Evelyn, how dazzling you are!" exclaimed Mrs. Mabury, as the light fell upon the large rubies, surrounded by diamonds, which ornamented the comb confining her golden curls at the back of her head, and upon her necklace and bracelets, formed of the same valuable gems. "Why have I never seen you wear those splendid ornaments before?"

"Have you never seen them? They were a present from my father on my marriage. I have worn them little, because I have had a foolish fancy for pearls, which, like other foolish fancies, is passing away."

Pearls were the ornaments in which Euston Hastings preferred to see Evelyn. He smiled languidly as he said, "You will outshine the ballet-dancers to-night, Evelyn, and will attract almost as many gazers."

As he concluded, he turned a glance of undisguised admiration on Mrs. Mabury, whose only ornament was a string of large pearls interwoven with the glossy braid of dark hair, wound gracefully around her finely-formed head. Evelyn's courage had almost given way at that glance,—she could scarcely press back to her heart the gushing tears.

The carriage was announced, and Euston Hastings arose to assist the ladies in cloaking. Only Evelyn herself could have told how much was wanting of the tenderness which he usually mingled with such little attentions when offered to her. In their progress to the theatre, and when there, he continued to exhibit to her the utmost courtesy, but a courtesy so cold, that it was more wounding than neglect. As Euston Hastings had prophesied, glasses were levelled at her from the pit and the surrounding boxes; and if the gazers were at first attracted by the brilliancy of her jewels,

it was evident that these were soon forgotten in admiration of the beauty they adorned. Euston Hastings was well pleased that his wife should appear thus, but no softer emotion towards Evelyn arose in his heart. Evelyn presented herself to him in the attitude of one who asserted a *claim* to his consideration—a *right* to his affection, and this was an attitude peculiarly offensive to a nature as proud and indolent and self-absorbed as his. Beneath all this pride and indolence and self-love, there still doubtless throbbed a heart, and Evelyn had reached it, by venturing into the very shadow of death, to snatch him thence; but her influence over his affections could only have been maintained by the same unquestioning devotion which had won it. As it was, he saw the burning agony in her eye, the fever flush upon her cheek, the proud and bitter smile of a slighted heart upon her lip, and he knew that at a word, a glance from him, the pride would have been subdued, the bitterness forgotten, and she would have cast herself, all tears and submission, in his arms; but not thus must the contest end. She must learn that his will bowed not, swerved not from its course, though that course lay over crushed and bleeding hearts. As yet, he only laughed at her folly—she had not sinned beyond forgiveness—but the forgiveness must be sought by her, not proffered by him.

The most agreeable, perhaps we should rather say, the most tolerable moment of the evening to Evelyn, was that in which the movements of her companions told her that the entertainment which had brought them there was at an end. Of that entertainment she knew little. All perception was with her concentrated on one subject. She looked steadily on the stage, though scenes were enacting there from which she would ordinarily have turned away with shame, if not with d[illegible]ust. She answered the gay

remarks of her companions in as gay a tone, though not always to the purpose, and forgot the next moment that they had spoken. On her return to Mrs. Mabury's, she found Mr. Beresford awaiting her, and her carriage standing at the door. Mrs. Mabury proffered refreshments, and Evelyn, hoping at the last for some word or look from her husband, some sign that they parted in sorrow rather than in anger, would have gone in with her, but Mr. Beresford was weary, and with more than usual firmness resisted all proposals of delay.

"Good-night, Evelyn," said Euston Hastings, offering her his hand at the carriage-door; "I shall see you at dinner to-morrow."

Evelyn could not speak—she could only put her hand in his. Hers was deathly cold; and for a moment, he was tempted to whisper some tenderer adieu in her ear, but Mr. Beresford drew near, and he moved aside for him. Mrs. Mabury was speaking to Mr. Beresford.

"You should have gone with us to the theatre," she said to him; "the ballêt was really interesting, and the dancers very tolerable."

"Ballêt! was that the entertainment?" he asked in a tone which sufficiently marked his appreciation of it.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Mabury, "and remember I here throw down my glove and challenge you the next time we meet, to the attack which I see you are longing to make upon it."

"I am an old man, with old-fashioned notions perhaps—but," said Mr. Beresford, suddenly checking himself, "I must not enter the lists against a lady."

"Nay, by all knightly law, it were discourtesy not to do so, when she has herself challenged you to the combat,—so say your worst."

"That is soon done; my best and my worst on this sub-

ject is, God forbid that we should continue to import hither the follies and vices of Europe!"

"But you surely would not call this a vice—a folly it may be—but how much of life's enjoyments consists of graceful follies."

"However graceful, unworthy a reasoning, I will not say a religious being; but this is more than a folly. If it be not a vice, it is the fruitful source of vice, by destroying those delicate susceptibilities which are among the most effectual barriers against it."

"I verily believe, Mr. Beresford," said Mrs. Mabury, with a laugh, "you people of *delicate susceptibilities* would have us clothe our statues and drape our paintings."

"Not while paintings and statues express that ideal beauty whose passionless repose shows it to be not 'of the earth, earthy,' and the contemplation of which, by elevating us to its own sphere, places us beyond the influence of adventitious circumstances; but let a painting or statue become expressive in countenance or attitude of human passion, and I should wish it draped. I speak freely, my dear lady, but you will pardon an old man who feels assured that your own memory of the feelings with which you first saw these exhibitions abroad, will bear witness to the truth of his sentiments."

"Nay, nay—this is too much, to expect me to testify against myself; but it is too late and too chilly to stand talking here any longer. I must take another opportunity to parry your home-thrusts. Good-night."

"Come out with Mr. Hastings to-morrow, and dine with us, and we will end the combat."

"Very well—I will, and Evelyn and Mr. Hastings shall be our umpires."

The carriage was already in motion, and Evelyn was spared the necessity of replying. When Euston Hastings

left her, she had sunk back into the carriage, and Mr. Beresford, finding her indisposed to converse, and supposing that she was wearied, suffered her to rest there while he slept or seemed to sleep in the opposite corner. At Beresford Hall, declining refreshments, Evelyn retired immediately to her own room. The jewels still sparkled brightly in her hair, and on her neck and arms, but the brightness had faded from her eyes, the flush from her cheeks. Pale and worn, she undressed hastily and threw herself upon her bed, —for the first time within her memory, without a prayer. Feeding bitter and resentful passions in her heart, Evelyn dared not pray, and experience had not yet taught her that the fruit of such passions must be like themselves, bitter.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Some murmur when their sky is clear
And golden bright to view,
If but one speck of dark appear
In their great Heaven of blue;
And some with thankful love are filled
If but one gleam of light,
One ray of God's good mercy, gild
The darkness of their night."

The reconciliation of lovers may be the renewal of love, provided the reconciliation be prompt, full, free; but the danger in all quarrels, and especially in domestic quarrels, is, that circumstances shall compel a cessation of hostilities without a true reconciliation, and there is no surer death to affection than this hollow peace, in which the heart has no share. Such was the peace which at this time existed between Evelyn and Euston Hastings. Had their first meeting on his return from New York been without witnesses, she would probably have given utterance to all the sorrow, anger, and jealous love, whose smothered fires were consuming her heart; but Mrs. Mabury was with him, and though Evelyn's hand trembled when she placed it in his, and he read something of reproach in her eyes, she bore herself so bravely through the day, that even her father did not suspect her hidden agony, while to Mrs. Mabury she seemed more gay and talkative than she had ever seen her.

This first moment lost, Evelyn would perhaps have found it difficult with any to call up the past, and give and ob-

tain that full explanation necessary to satisfy the heart; and what would have been difficult with others was impossible with Euston Hastings, when he had determined, as in the present instance, to avoid what he called a "scene." His conduct was so nicely modulated, that while it gave her no reason for complaint, it held out to her no encouragement for confidence. There was no angry word or look to call forth the waters of bitterness, no demonstration of love to unseal the fountain of tenderness in her heart. One afternoon he entered his room in search of a book which he had left there. Evelyn had thrown herself upon the bed, and slept in an attitude so graceful that he paused beside her in admiration. Suddenly her lips quivered, she caught her breath sobbingly, and murmured a few words, of which he could only distinguish, "Love me! oh, love me!"

For an instant his heart relented; he bent over her, but ere word or touch had roused her, other thoughts came, and he withdrew quickly and noiselessly. He had brought away the book he sought, but it was long unread. He was not satisfied with himself, but to all the reproaches of his awakened heart he replied, "I cannot live in the perpetual excitement which Evelyn's exacting nature would create for me, if it were not repressed. Life can never be joyous for me, for whom it is ever overshadowed by death—never-ending death; but at least I will preserve it calm, and snatch from it the few pleasures it contains."

Thus flowed away Evelyn's life, smoothly on the surface, darkly and roughly below, till November, when the house which Euston Hastings had taken in the city was ready to receive them. She had begun to look forward to this event with pleasure, as probably compelling some confidence between them, but Euston Hastings seemed to have forgotten that there had ever been any doubt of her accompanying him, and all his arrangements were made in such a quiet,

unhesitating manner, that Evelyn fell into them as a matter of course. She found that every attention which the warmest affection could have suggested, had been paid not only to her comfort, but to her taste, in the arrangement of those apartments destined for her. In her chamber and her dressing-room all was luxurious elegance, no comfort had been forgotten,—and below-stairs, the conservatory had been filled with her favorite flowers, and a room opening upon it had been furnished with musical instruments, a small bookcase, a few lounging chairs, and vases already holding exquisite bouquets.

"This is your room, Evelyn," said Euston Hastings, as he introduced her to it.

A few weeks before, Evelyn would have thrown herself into his arms, and thanked him there for what she would have regarded as a new proof of love. Now, she answered sadly and almost coldly, "I know not how to thank you."

"Let me see you cheerful and happy, Evelyn, and I shall need no other thanks."

Happy! what a mockery seemed the word so spoken to Evelyn! She soon discovered that the life they led in the city was not calculated to draw nearer hearts already separated. Well-nigh all the day, and not unfrequently much of the night, was spent by Euston Hastings in the pursuit of pleasures which are found only in a crowd. They rarely met without observers, except at breakfast, and then the morning paper, or the recapitulation of his evening's amusement, effectually warded off any effort which Evelyn might have been disposed to make at more interesting conversation. And soon Evelyn felt with him, that the best which she could win from life was a fleeting excitement, scarcely deserving the name of pleasure. There was no hope that the destruction of her earthly joys would elevate her to a higher sphere of thought and feeling, for there was no sub-

mission in her heart. If she were not prepared, like the impious wife of Job, to "curse God and die," she would, like the prophet, have justified herself and exclaimed against the voice of rebuke—"I do well to be angry." Her whole being was swayed by one wild, passionate desire which she would not relinquish, and dared not bring into the presence of the Holiest. She had therefore ceased to pray, shutting herself up by her own will to the darkness of despair—a darkness broken only by fitful and lurid flashes of senseless mirth.

Evelyn became the belle of the season. The presence of the beautiful Mrs. Hastings made a play or concert popular, or a party the fashion. The wise observed her course with sorrow and apprehension.

"Really Mrs. Hastings is making herself quite remarkable. Did you observe how she flirted with Mr. —— last evening?—in her husband's presence too!"

The speaker little thought that her husband's presence had been Evelyn's only temptation to the flirtation.

"Poor thing! she is to be pitied—she was married so young, and to one old enough for her father."

Such were the observations of the malicious, and the excuses of the charitable.

Mrs. Mabury was happy again, for Euston Hastings was scarcely less in her society than he had been in his days of bachelorhood, while she and Evelyn met oftener at other houses than their own. Euston Hastings never spoke to her of Evelyn, but she thought he must have begun to doubt the truth of that passionate devotion, which she believed to have been her chief charm in his eyes, and which seemed to Mrs. Mabury quite irreconcilable with her present life. In this, however, Mrs. Mabury was mistaken. Euston Hastings was too well skilled in the heart's lore to doubt Evelyn for a moment. He saw that her most violent flirta-

tions were intended solely for his observation, and they excited only a smile at her folly.

But if Euston Hastings was satisfied, Mr. Beresford was not. He saw Evelyn frequently, and amid all her gayety, there was something in her tone which made him doubt that she was happy, while he grieved over the transformation of his simple-hearted, and as he had hoped, religiously thoughtful Evelyn, into a worldly woman of fashion. In his perplexity and chagrin, his thoughts turned to his ward, Mary Raymond.

"Women understand each other," he said to himself. "Mary would soon find out what is the matter with Evelyn, and by her gentle seriousness, she would, perhaps, win her to a more rational and quiet life."

With such hopes he wrote to Mary, telling her of the loneliness to which Evelyn's removal had condemned him, and entreating her to come and take the place of the daughter he had been compelled to relinquish to another. Mary obeyed the summons promptly, though at the thought of returning to Beresford Hall, bitter memories awoke within her, and for a while she shrank from scenes associated with humiliation and conflict. She feared, too, the influence of those scenes upon her peace—she feared that a voice would echo through the halls, that a form would glide through the dim woods or stand beside the sounding shore, which it was not well for her to remember, except at the solemn hour of prayer, when her spirit, surmounting all the accidents of time and sense, could bring its loved ones with it into the very presence of the Eternal, where no selfish desire, no murmuring thought dared intrude.

For eight long months had Everard Irving been a wanderer from home and friends, and what grieved Mary far more, from duties. It is true, his fortune was such as rendered it unnecessary for him to be very diligent in the

practice of his profession for his own sake, but he was a man, and for him too, there were duties to his fellow-men—duties incompatible with his giving so much of life to no higher purpose than forgetfulness. Mary had received no direct communication from him during his absence, but rumors that he had been seen, now in Italy, now in Germany, and again in Switzerland, had reached her ear. From Mr. Beresford painfully interesting intelligence respecting him awaited her. A fire, destroying much property in that part of the city where property is most valuable, had occurred just before her arrival.

"I am sorry," said Mr. Beresford, a few days after her coming, as they sat at breakfast together, "I am sorry to learn that our friend Irving has lost a great deal by this fire. I hope it is not so bad as his agent Banker thinks. He came to me the other day, like a miserly dog as he is, to consult me on the propriety of honoring Mr. Irving's last draft for a thousand dollars, which he had just received from Paris. He says, that just before Mr. Irving went away, he sold out every thing he possessed, and invested his whole capital in two stores which have been burned, and that by an oversight of his own, for which I told him he ought to be compelled to make good the loss, the insurance had run out the very day before the fire, and had only been renewed in one office, and that, it is supposed, cannot pay ten cents on a dollar of its debts. To make the ruin more complete, these stores were built on leased ground, and the lease had nearly expired. It was an unwise purchase in Mr. Irving, I think; but it seems there was an article in the lease compelling the owners of the ground to renew it, on its termination, or to buy the buildings at a fair valuation."

"And does Mr. Irving's draft remain unpaid?" inquired Mary.

"Oh no! I saw to that at once."

"Then Mr. Irving owes you a thousand dollars," said Mary after a short pause.

"It is a debt of which I hope he will never hear, if his affairs be really in the condition that Banker represents. I told him that I would advance the money for this draft, provided he would say nothing to Mr. Irving of the source from which it came. I advised, however, that he should lose no time in giving him information of the disaster which had occurred, and of his consequent inability to meet any future demands."

A long silence followed this communication. Mr. Beresford had taken up the morning paper, and Mary did not seem disposed to interrupt his reading. At length he laid it aside and rose from table.

"May I say a few words to you before you go?" asked Mary.

Her tone was quick, eager, yet embarrassed, as if she spoke with difficulty, and feared her own strength if she paused for a moment.

"Certainly, as many as you will—but I hope you have not been falling in love, and promising to leave me for somebody else," he added, with a good-humored smile as he placed himself at her side, and looked into her flushed and agitated face.

"Oh no! I only wished to ask you—to propose to you—"

"Is it any thing in relation to Mr. Irving's affairs?" asked Mr. Beresford, seeing the difficulty with which she spoke.

"It is—Everard Irving has always been to me as a brother; it would be my desire, I am sure it would have been my father's had he lived to this time, that he should share my fortune, such as it is."

"Such as it is! it is a very handsome fortune, let me tell you, Mary."

"I would none the less gladly, sir, share it with one whom, as I have already said, I have been accustomed to regard as a brother—but this, I suppose, could hardly be done without his knowing it, and that would, I fear, ensure its rejection; but could not a smaller sum, yet not too small to secure to him the comforts to which he has been accustomed, be paid to his agent as if from that insurance office;"—Mr. Beresford shook his head—"or in some way that would make it appear as the product of his own property?"

"I will see Banker this morning, and ascertain what can be done,—but my dear child, there is one difficulty which has not occurred to you. You are not of age, and I do not think I can with any propriety permit you to alienate any large amount of your property."

Mary looked distressed.

"Oh, Mr. Beresford!" she exclaimed after a moment's struggle to speak without tears, "if this be not done now, before Everard Irving returns, it can never be done. I pray you do not deny me so great a gratification."

"Mary, I know not what to say. My heart is with you, but I know it would be vain to hope for Mr. Martin's concurrence in any such arrangement, and that would be necessary to render it valid. This I may do—I can advance a few thousands—not more than five—for you, and you can repay me when you are of age. Will this do?"

"Thank you—thank you—it is more than I could have expected from you, though very little for him."

"I would gladly do more for you if I could, but I called in all the ready money I had at Evelyn's marriage, and I really cannot command more at present. Perhaps," he added, after a thoughtful pause, "it may be better so for Mr. Irving himself. The unbending necessities of life con-

trolling his exuberant imagination, and forcing him from the indulgence of morbid regrets into action, may do more for his true happiness than wealth has done or can do."

It was a suggestion full of comfort to Mary. This might indeed be for Everard the wise discipline of a Father's love, and she would not avert it if she could.

"But the small sum you have named would not free him from the necessity of action," she said, doubtfully, to Mr. Beresford.

"No—it would only lend to action the stimulus of hope. It will be a work of time for him to get into practice as a lawyer—this will save him from want until he does so."

"With this, then, I will be satisfied. Will you see to it this morning for me? I need not ask that you will say nothing to any one else on the subject."

"Certainly not—I will order—shall I order the carriage, and take you to Evelyn's, before I go to Banker's?"

Mary knew that Mr. Beresford wished her to go, and therefore she assented. She had seen Evelyn several times, both at Beresford Hall and in the city, but she could scarcely be said to have conversed with her yet. She had found her full of a restless, and, as Mary thought, affected gayety, talking much, but on subjects far removed from herself. But Mary had only seen Evelyn hitherto when she had expected and prepared for the meeting. This morning she came upon her unawares, and she found her at the breakfast-table, alone and in tears.

"What is the matter, dear Evelyn?—where is Mr. Hastings?" she exclaimed, with anxiety.

"Taking his coffee in his dressing-room; so you sit down and take yours with me, and just forget that you have seen these foolish tears. I feel so miserably in the morning, that I am very apt, if left to myself, to end with a hearty cry."

"Then you should not be left to yourself. Why do you

not go and take your coffee with Mr. Hastings, if he prefer taking his in his own apartment?"

"Because I am not sure I should be welcome," said Evelyn, striving to speak gayly; but, spite of her efforts, her lip quivered, her eyes filled, and after vainly trying to subdue the rising tempest, she dropped her head upon her friend's shoulder, and sobbed out, "Oh Mary! he loves me no more, and I would give worlds to be as indifferent as he."

"Dear Evelyn! this must be a lovesick fancy; it is so short a time since you wrote me, with such a joyous spirit, of your husband's tenderness."

"It was all true," sobbed Evelyn, "all true till Mrs. Mabury came, and then I was nothing."

"What! jealous, Evelyn? Now this is unworthy of you. If Mr. Hastings had preferred Mrs. Mabury to you, why did he not marry her when he was perfectly free to do so?"

Evelyn was silent.

"Does Mr. Hastings know your doubts, your unhappiness, Evelyn?"

"I do not know. I rarely see him alone, and I try, when he is present, to be as gay and as cold as he is."

"Is that right?—nay, is it wise, Eva?"

"I thought he loved me, and that he could not bear such coldness—that he would learn to value my love when he feared to lose it."

"Oh Evelyn! pardon me, but this was all unworthy of you—the conduct, the motives. You were blinded by passion, Evelyn,—a bad guide always."

"Mary, you know not what it is to love as I have done—as I do—to give your life, your soul to one object, and to be met by an indifference which kills you, yet which does not permit you to complain."

"Evelyn, pardon me again, I pray you—but should we give life and soul to an earthly object?"

"Oh Mary! do not talk to me so—I cannot bear a lecture now," said Evelyn, hastily.

"And I would not give you pain for worlds, but believe me, dear Evelyn, all happiness must be brief which is founded on such a mistake." Evelyn made a gesture of impatience, and Mary continued, "But even for this shortlived happiness you have not, I think, acted wisely."

"And what should I have done, Mary? I will do any thing—any thing—for one word, one look of tenderness from him."

"I may be wrong, Evelyn, but it seems to me, that feeling as you do to Mr. Hastings, far from braving his anger, and endeavoring to seem indifferent to his coldness, you should at once have thrown yourself upon his heart, and let him see the grief he caused you."

"But he cannot bear tears—they always drive him from me."

"That probably would depend on the cause of the tears: if they were expressive of dissatisfaction with him, he would very naturally dislike them; but if they proceeded from sorrow for having displeased him, from dissatisfaction with yourself—"

"But how can that be, Mary? how can I be dissatisfied with myself, when I have done nothing—nothing but love him too well. Surely it cannot be right that I should never differ from him—that his will should be a law to my very thoughts and feelings."

"And yet if your life, your soul be given to him, Evelyn, it must be so."

"And is this right?"

"No, Evelyn; it is only God, the All-Perfect, who should thus sway our being: yet, Evelyn, there can be nothing wrong in so loving another as to prefer their gratification—*their will*, if you choose—to our own, in all in

which a principle is not involved, and if we do this, we shall be dissatisfied with ourselves when we displease them for any thing less than the performance of a higher duty. Was it for this that you braved the displeasure of Mr. Hastings, Evelyn?"

"I hardly know what or how it was, Mary. At first he wounded me by seeming so indifferent to my wishes in removing from my father's, and then—it is impossible to recollect every thing, Mary,—but he was so cold and careless that I believe he drove me mad."

"Ah, Evelyn! was it like true love thus to combat for its own selfish desires?"

"Mary, you cannot doubt my love for my husband, whatever else you do. Love him! How gladly would I die at his feet this moment but to hear him say, My Evelyn! life has no joy for me without you!"

Mary sighed and was silent. What could she say to one who so little understood what she regarded as the first element of love—a generous preference of the happiness of the beloved object to our own. What Evelyn considered a proof of devoted love, seemed to Mary to indicate but the selfishness of passion. She, too, could die for one, but it would be to secure for him life and life's best blessings, not to win for herself the assurance that she was necessary to him.

"But Mary, you have not told me what I should do now," said Evelyn, when she found that Mary continued silent; "can I do nothing? must I live on in hopeless despair?"

"Oh no, Evelyn! If reconciliation with your husband and the recovery of his love, be indeed your first object, despair not, for that to which we are willing to sacrifice all else, we rarely fail to attain,—but you must show this willingness, and the first thing you will need to sacrifice now, is your

pride. You must go to your husband, and tell him all you have suffered and do suffer in this separation from him."

"I would have done so many days ago, if he had given me an opportunity."

"You must make an opportunity. You say he is in his room—go to him there, now."

"Go there—to his dressing-room—I cannot: besides, Dixon is there, now," and Evelyn turned pale with agitation, at the thought of thus forcing herself into her husband's presence. She had scarcely spoken, however, when Dixon presented himself at the door of the breakfast-room, to ask for the morning paper for Mr. Hastings.

"There it is, Evelyn," said Mary quickly; "you were going up to Mr. Hastings, you had better take it, and tell Dixon you will ring for him when he is wanted."

Evelyn took the paper, and moved towards the door with trembling steps. Her courage failed, and she turned irresolutely back, looking so pale, that Mary poured out a glass of water and met her with it. Evelyn put it aside.

"Courage, Evelyn!" whispered Mary; "I would see you happy before I leave you."

The thought brought a faint smile to Evelyn's lip. Again she went on, and this time with firmer resolution, for she accomplished her purpose.

Dixon still waited respectfully at the door until Mary, recollecting that he had received no orders, said, "Mrs. Hastings will ring for you when you are wanted, Dixon."

He bowed, and withdrew with an expression of pleasure in his countenance, which made Mary suspect that he was not wholly ignorant of the domestic relations of his master, whom he had served faithfully for more than twenty years.

Mary remained full of anxious thought for Evelyn—

opeful for the present, fearful for the future—feeling that ermanent happiness could not be the result of such abanlonment to the wild impulses of passion, as she betrayed n every word. Thus minutes glided away, till a half hour—three-quarters had passed, and still her meditation had been broken by nothing more interesting than the entrance of the servants to remove the breakfast-table. But now steps are heard approaching. Can that be Evelyn who comes springing so lightly forward, with a face still wet with recent tears, yet bright with smiles, followed by Euston Hastings, with his stern lineaments wearing more of softness than Mary had ever seen on them before!

"Miss Raymond," he said, as he entered, "Evelyn has brought me here to make an apology for her leaving you so long. Instead of apologizing, however, I will frankly tell you that I do not know another lady whom she would have treated so badly—"

"Ah, traitor!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"For it is only with those she loves that she takes such liberties," continued Euston Hastings, smilingly.

He remained a few minutes conversing with Mary in an easy, playful strain.

"I hope, Eva," he said at length, "that Miss Raymond will spend the day with you, though I shall not be able to enjoy the pleasure of her company myself, as I promised yesterday to dine with a friend who is just about sailing for Europe."

"Are you going to leave me to-day?" asked Evelyn, with an almost reproachful emphasis on the last word—at least so Euston Hastings understood it, for he answered,

"Do not reproach me with my misfortune."

"Will you stay with me, Mary?"

Mary declined, for she feared that Mr. Beresford would not find an opportunity, while she was there, of communi-

cating to her the result of those efforts in which she was so deeply interested.

"Then I will go with you and papa," said Evelyn.

"Do so, Eva, and I will come for you this evening."

"Will you? Oh, that will be delightful!" exclaimed Evelyn, dismissing the shadow of a cloud which had begun to darken her brow.

Euston Hastings made his adieus, but returned to say, "Persuade Miss Raymond and your father to return your visit to-morrow, Eva, and I will engage some of Mr. Beresford's old friends to meet him at dinner."

Evelyn felt that this was intended as a delicate attention to herself, and as the closing of the street-door assured her that her husband was actually gone, she threw herself into Mary's arms, exclaiming, "You have taught me the way to his heart, Mary, and I can never long be unhappy again."

Mary endeavored to insinuate that it was a way which must not be tried too often, but Evelyn was too happy for cautions—she would listen to nothing but her own happy auguries.

That night, as Mary thought over the events of the day, with her gratitude that she had seen Evelyn restored again to peace, and her deeper and more joyous emotion that, through Mr. Beresford, she had been able to interpose some defence, slight though she felt it to be, between a dearer friend and the first crushing stroke of evil fortune, was mingled trembling for both. She could find rest for her apprehensions only in the thought, that for them, as for her, this darkened or cloud-environed earth was overarched by a clear, serene Heaven,—that for them, too, might

"The night *be* mother of the day,
The winter of the spring"

CHAPTER XIV.

"Behind the cloud the starlight lurks,
Through showers the sunbeams fall;
For God, who loveth all His works,
Hath left His hope with all."

J. G. WHITTIER.

EVERARD IRVING'S love for Evelyn had been a passion, to which the slight obstacles opposed by Mr. Beresford had but added intensity. Its disappointment had "sicklied o'er with the pale cast" of his own sorrowful thoughts every object in creation. All persons and places which could by any possibility be associated with his brief dream of joy and its wreck, became distasteful to him, and he fled from them all to the wild solitudes of Nature. He paused not even for a glance at the wonders of London or the splendors of Paris; but, goaded by passionate impulses, hastened from their unsympathizing crowds to the craggy mountains and secluded dells of Switzerland. As the opening summer brought fashionable tourists thither, he hurried off to the rude forests of Hungary, and thence to the then little sought regions of Sweden and Denmark. In a few weeks the excitement under which he had left America had passed away, but it had been followed by a languor equally removed from health. Evelyn was almost, if not quite forgotten; but his affections seemed to have exhausted themselves, and in ceasing to love her, he appeared to have ceased to love at all. It was the natural effect of experiences such as his, on a character into which the great principle, that duties and

not pleasures are the objects of life, had not yet been burned by the fire of adversity. Under a trial in some degree similar to that which he endured, Mary, with more confirmed religious faith and consequently higher principles, had turned easily to this great practical truth, and had found, in the good she did, consolation for the evil she had suffered; while Mrs. Mabury, with a lower moral standard, a less pure moral taste than he possessed, had sought a balsam for her wounded spirit in reckless mirth and vain shows. Elevated above the last, while he had not attained to the first, Everard wandered hither and thither seeking rest, yet finding none. The great danger of such a condition lay in its anti-social tendencies. He who had been so large-hearted, of such warm, cordial sympathies, now looked with indifference upon almost every form of human emotion. This proceeded in part from a latent distrust, a feeling not that the joy or sorrow which appeared on the surface actually was, but that it *might be* false, and in part from a reserve which was becoming daily more unconquerable.

With such habits as we have described, Everard Irving's personal expenses had not been great, but he had in a few months spent thousands in the purchase of objects of art. Few persons in the United States at that time could boast such treasures in painting and statuary as those of which he had become master. This revival of his early tastes was favorable to the return of healthier feelings, for it was associated with his first and most confiding affections. He could not see a fine painting without thought of Mr. Manelli, his first and only master in the art, and with thought of him Mary was inseparably linked. These he could not doubt. It was a proof of the complete separation which at this time existed between him and the actual world,—the world of duties,—that while Mary was thus associated with the objects of his almost undivided interest, and his thoughts were daily and hourly

borne back to her, he never wrote to her, and scarcely contemplated meeting her again as a probability.

His interest in objects of art led Everard Irving to Italy. He had at first avoided it as the great centre of attraction to others; but he now knew that it was possible for him to live surrounded by his fellow-creatures, without entering into their circle of feeling or action. Well was it for Everard Irving that he was roused from the selfish egotism which such a possibility betokened! Well would it have been for him, though the blow which dispelled his slumbers had crushed into irretrievable ruin his earthly fortunes! He was now in Rome, surrounded by the monuments of man's greatness and his littleness,—by the columns and arches which commemorated his energy, his power, in the attainment of ignoble or unholy ends, of his own aggrandizement or the destruction of his race,—by the glorious beauty which his imagination had conceived and his hand embodied, and before which he had prostrated himself in senseless superstition. We will not attempt to follow him step by step through the streets of this Queen of the Past. Not there was the living spark which was to rekindle his exhausted energies. He had come a selfish dreamer, and he was preparing to depart with no nobler purposes awakened in his soul, when he received letters from his banker in Paris and his agent in America. The last completely changed all his views of life and plans of action. His banker informed him of his readiness to honor his bills to the amount of a thousand dollars over and above the sum remaining in his hands for him, in consideration of a draft received from Everard on his agent in America. The letter of his agent informed him that five thousand dollars was all that remained in his hands subject to his order. And from this five thousand dollars the one thousand, for which he had been negotiating with his Paris banker, was to be deducted—nay, since

that negotiation had been commenced, secure of his credit with that gentleman and his resources in America, he had given expensive orders. These orders were principally for statuary, which the artists would have been unable to execute except on the certainty of payment which an order is supposed to give. He could not throw back their work on the hands of these men, though it should take every dollar he owned to pay them. Such a course would be ruinous to them and dishonorable to him. Everard scarcely breathed till he had calculated the amount of his orders, of his expenses home, and of the transportation of his treasures. These last, when they reached America, would have cost him nearly ten thousand dollars, and would scarcely be of any value to him there as property. But he paused not to think of this. The one great point was ascertained—he could pay for them, he could transport them and himself home, and with good fortune and economy he might even have a few hundred dollars left when he arrived there. This conviction attained, he rose from his calculation with a more buoyant spirit than he had felt for months. His future course was plain,—to return home by the most rapid route, and to plunge at once into the business of life—TO WORK. He too was a son of Adam, and on him had the sentence been pronounced, "By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou win thy bread."

And already Everard Irving manifested, if he did not feel, that this sentence, like every other utterance of the Creator, was the dictate of love. His letters had found him in his room, inert, languid, undecided,—after an hour's deliberation over their contents, he went forth active, energetic, determined. We introduced him first to our readers an impulsive boy, surrendering himself wholly to the guidance of his affections; disappointed in these, he had lost all object, all aim in life, and become a useless dreamer, no

longer striving with the current of existence, but floating idly along its surface. Now a storm had arisen, the waves threatened to engulf him, and instinctively he put forth all his awakened energies. As yet he had no higher motive than his own preservation; but was he not a nobler being while exerting all his powers even for such an object, than while those powers remained sleeping—seemingly dead—within him? Nobler—ay, and happier, as he and all will find who try the experiment. The worker fulfils partially the law impressed upon his being by Infinite Wisdom and Love, and in so far he is happier than the idler,—the worker for noble ends fulfils the whole law, and he knows something even here of the joy of Heaven.

Everard Irving's decisions and movements were now alike rapid. In a few days his arrangements in Rome were completed, and he was once more *en route* for Paris and America. Steam-packets and railroads had not yet annihilated any part of time and space, and the letter whose communications were so important to him, though it had left New York in November, had not reached him in Rome until the middle of February, having had a long voyage to Havre, and met with various detentions on its route from that place to Paris, and thence to Rome. In a week after its reception, Everard was on the road, yet it was nearly the middle of March when he arrived in Paris. A few days sufficed to arrange his business there, and again he resumed his journey. As he passed through the streets of Paris to the office from which he was to take the Diligence for Havre, the wheel of his coach became suddenly entangled in that of another going in an opposite direction. The enraged coachmen stormed and blustered and gesticulated at each other, without either of them seeming to think of the simple but necessary step of backing his horses. Everard would have ordered his coachman to do this, but

the windows of his coach were drawn up, and proved immoveable. While he was vainly exerting his strength upon them, the window nearest him in the other coach was suddenly dashed down, and a quick, determined voice cried, "En arrière—en arrière. Ne voyez-vous pas qu'il faut que vous fassiez reculer vos chevaux."

The order was obeyed, and the liberated carriages moved on their separate paths, but not before Everard had, to his surprise, recognised in the speaker, Euston Hastings, and in the lady at his side, not Evelyn, as he had anticipated, but Mrs. Mabury. Before he had recovered from the first surprise which this apparition occasioned, the carriage and its occupants were out of sight, nor could his coachman tell in what direction it had disappeared.

"Where is Evelyn? Can she be dead?" were thoughts that flashed for an instant across his mind. Had they rested there, they would have restored to her all her power over his soul, for Evelyn in Heaven, Evelyn free from earthly imperfections and earthly ties, would have been his again;—but he discarded the disturbing imagination in a moment, with a smile at what he felt to be his own folly.

"Evelyn is doubtless in Paris too," he said to himself, "and I am glad of it. I would rather not meet them on my first arrival. Before they return, I shall have taken my position in society as one of the working-class. Until I have conquered fortune, there will be little danger of my encountering them—their sphere will be far above me—*above*, that will admit a doubt."

The word was a text for many thoughts, in which a self-reliance, noble, because true and not unassociated with conscious dependence upon the great source of strength, gave assurance of future success.

Everard Irving's voyage homeward was long and stormy,

The chilly showers which often usher in the poets' chosen month of May in this climate, were his welcome home. Not those

> "Spring showers which only make,
> The smiles that follow shine more brightly."

It was all dark, dank, comfortless,—mud below, and one unbroken, leaden fog above, and on every side. Yet the usual bustle, or even more than the usual bustle, prevailed on the dock at which the passengers from the good ship Henri Quatre were landed; for at the same time, a steamboat lay beside it, receiving the passengers for the Duchesse D'Orleans, which was that day to sail for Havre. Everard had to pass over the deck of this steamboat to make his way to the shore. As he stepped from the plank, a lady stood ready to cross it. She was wrapped in a furred cloak, and wore a bonnet drawn closely over her face, and a veil of such a material as would have concealed her features even in a brighter light than that in which she then stood. Everard had observed her thus closely while detained for a moment by the crowd, because the face of the servant who attended her was familiar to him. He even fancied that he had heard the name "Dixon"—by which she called on him to remove some obstruction from her path, applied to that face before, though where or when he could not recall. The lady's voice too, touched a chord in his heart, whose vibrations had caused the most pleasurable and the most painful emotions of his life. But this only elicited from him the impatient thought, "Have I come home only to be haunted by memories of Evelyn. I hoped the knowledge that she was abroad, would lay those memories to rest."

Who doubts animal magnetism? Let him who does, recall the thrill that ran through his frame at receiving the cordial grasp with which a friend welcomed him back,

after long wanderings, to his native land. Everard felt that thrill, as Mr. Manelli stepped from the crowd to greet him. It seemed for the moment another fantasy of his own excited imagination; but no—there was the earnest, thoughtful, yet childlike face,—childlike in its simple truth,—the bowed figure,—and there the warm smiling welcome, the cordial grasp,—again Everard sought and found it, as he exclaimed, "Am I awake, or in a dream? What could have brought you here?"

"To look for you, *mio amico.*"

"But to New York, I mean."

"Oh! that is a long story—you must come home with me, and then I will tell you. Come—here is a carriage."

"My kind friend! kind as ever, I see. But I must go to a hotel first, and make a land-toilette."

"You shall come and make that in your own room," said the smiling old man, pleased to mystify his young companion.

"My own room! You talk in riddles!"

"Never mind how I talk—you come with me; if you do not like your room you can leave it, and no harm will be done."

Everard could not resist the kindly face, the warm heart, the guiding arm; he ascended the carriage, and, without interfering, saw the porter with his baggage ordered to follow them.

"How did you hear of my arrival?" asked Everard, as Mr. Manelli seated himself beside him.

"Miss Raymond told us that we must be on the look-out for you, as Mr. Beresford thought you would be here about this time, and we had the list of passengers on board your ship brought up by a pilot-boat some hours ago."

The carriage entered Greenwich-street, and not far from the Battery stopped before a large and handsome, though

old-fashioned house. Before the bell could be rung, the door was opened, and the friendly face of Aspasié Manelli appeared at it. Blessed power of association! In a moment Everard was at home. The joys and sorrows, the hopes and disappointments of the last two years, were swept away for a time by the full tide of his boyhood's quiet, but not less deep affections, for it was in the birthplace of those affections that he had known the friends who now smiled upon him.

"Follow me, and I will show you your room," said Aspasié, as soon as their first greetings were over.

They ascended to the next story, but she did not permit him to pause there.

"Single gentlemen, like you and my father," she said, playfully, "must be contented with a third-story room."

She led the way to one which was large, airy, and handsome, overlooking the street. As Everard entered, he was for a moment startled to find himself surrounded by objects familiar to him from his boyhood. There were the curtains which had draperied the windows of his room at Mr. Raymond's, the bureau, the wardrobe, the very bedstead, and, remembered above all, the old-fashioned yet convenient writing-desk, at which his earliest efforts at epistolary productions had been made.

"Why, Aspasié!" he exclaimed, after a moment's survey of these objects, "what good fairy do you employ?"

"You might suspect my father of dealing with such spiritual beings, but for me the world holds nothing more spiritual than a good friend—such a good friend as Miss Raymond, who planned our establishment here, and has almost furnished it for us. She pointed out your furniture, and directed its arrangement as you see it."

"Dear Mary! she is worth a hundred fairies—but, Aspa-

sié, I fear this room will be beyond my means—I am a poor man now, you know."

Everard spoke cheerfully—even gayly; but Aspasié could not smile, and Mr. Manelli turned away with moist eyes.

"You have a good profession, Mr. Irving," said Aspasié, "and at present you can have this room on your own terms—it is unoccupied as you see—"

"Yes," interrupted the warm-hearted artist; "it is unoccupied—so why say any thing more about it. Come to it, and as to any thing more, why we will talk about that by-and-by."

"Thank you, my kind friend—but that will not do—I must be independent while I can. I have still something left, Aspasié, but till I have made that something more, I must be satisfied with a very humble home—such a one as I may hope to have for four or five dollars a week."

"If you give me four dollars a week, I shall be amply paid for this room at the present season—especially since you furnish it yourself."

"That is settled, then," said Mr. Manelli, anxious to terminate a subject which was painful to him; "so come and see my studio."

He opened a door which gave entrance through a closet into a back-room, of the same dimensions with that appropriated to Everard. Here stood one or two fine casts from antique statues, the walls were hung with pictures, and several unframed pictures stood on the floor leaning against them. Without pausing to direct Everard's attention to these, Mr. Manelli passed through them to a window, and throwing open the Venetian shutters, he called on Everard to look out. That window commanded a glorious view. Everard looked over the Battery, whose fine old trees spring had again decked with its earliest green, to the

waters of the harbor and bay, to Governor's Island, the quiet beauty of its verdant slopes contrasting so strangely with its grim fort, and to the smiling shore of New Jersey.

"Beautiful!" he exclaimed.

"A glorious view," said the artist, "it ought to bring glorious conceptions."

"Is this one of its fruits?" asked Everard, as he pointed to the easel on which was stretched a painting of large size.

"See!" said Mr. Manelli, as he withdrew the cover that concealed it.

"Mary!" burst from Everard's lips, and then he gazed long in silence upon that lovely picture for which Mary had sat from a desire to advance the interests of the artist. There were the thoughtful yet serene eyes, the regal brow, the mouth so lovely in its soft repose, the delicately fair, yet now healthful complexion, the symmetrical proportions of the rounded form, and yet more—a higher beauty still. The "Spirit still and bright," which shed "something of an angel light" over these mortal features, seemed to have breathed life—its own peaceful life, into the canvass.

"You have idealized here indeed," said Everard, at length.

"Idealize—what is idealize?" asked Mr. Manelli.

"You have impressed on Mary's features your own beautiful conception of an angel."

"That is, you mean, I have flattered her: no—'tis not so—I have made her as she is."

"Then she is more beautiful than ever living, breathing woman was before."

Everard spoke with an ardor which made Mr. Manelli smile as he said, "You will fall in love with my picture, if I do not cover it, and that will not be well, though I have

always had wonder that you did not fall in love with Mary herself."

He covered the painting as he spoke, and Everard turned away with a forced laugh and a heightened color.

"Fall in love with Mary!" what a strange thought!—so strange that again and again it recurred to him, and he found himself more than once that day living over as in a dream, the last few years of his life, as they might have been if he had sought and won, as that life's companion, a being such as that picture represented.

From such dreams he was aroused by the most startling intelligence.

CHAPTER XV.

"There, where I have garnered up my heart,
Where either I must live or bear no life,
The fountain from the which my current runs,
Or else dries up; to be discarded thence!"

SHAKSPEARE

We left Evelyn rejoicing in her newly-attained conviction, that she had acquired an infallible method of touching her husband's feelings, and opening his heart to her,—but the light of her spirit was not long unshadowed. She could be satisfied with nothing less than that entire devotion which had marked his manner to her during the first few weeks of their married life, or immediately after the fiery trial of her faith at Saratoga, and reconciliation had not restored to her this. Day after day her injudicious efforts to chain him to her side—her passionate remonstrances—her tearful appeals, drove him farther from her. She did not now attempt to wear the aspect of gay indifference which she had found so ineffectual; but with all the inconsistency of passion, she rather exaggerated his sovereign influence over her life. Hourly she found some new mode of making him feel her entire dependence on him for every enjoyment. She would accept no invitation until she had obtained his promise to accompany her, nor suffer him to partake of any social enjoyment in which she was not included, without evident regret. Mary, who was now much with Evelyn, saw the impatience with which

Euston Hastings bore such painful restraints upon his hitherto unlimited freedom of action, and she remonstrated with Evelyn—cautiously and tenderly.

"Surely, Mary, you would not have me a heartless pleasure-seeker, caring nothing for my husband's society."

"Certainly not, Evelyn—but I would have you capable of finding pleasure in other sources too."

"I do not desire other pleasures, that is enough for me."

"But, Evelyn, would not a generous affection lead a woman to defer this highest pleasure to her husband's inclinations; and to do this gracefully and effectually, must she not cultivate those tastes which would enable her to find enjoyment in even a solitary home? Solitary it is true, it could not long remain, if tenanted by so attractive a spirit."

Evelyn made no reply, but from that time she was more cautious in revealing to Mary the history of her disappointed hopes and vain efforts. It would be tedious to recount all these. One scene will suffice to show how passionately she struggled for the heart in whose love her very life lay hoarded, and with what cold impassiveness her struggles were met.

The elder Kean was in New York. All were crowding to see him, and Euston Hastings had accompanied a party for this purpose, of which Evelyn knew that Mrs. Mabury made one. She was at home and alone. Even the servants had retired at her command. Dixon had made some objection to this, but Evelyn had overruled it, saying, that as she should sit up for Mr. Hastings, it would not be necessary for any other to do so. She had thus secured a private interview with her husband, and the power of demonstrating to him most conclusively, the lonely suffering to which his absence condemned her. A supper after the play detained him, and he did not return home till one

o'clock. And through the long, silent hours of night, Evelyn cowered over a fire, which she was too much absorbed to think of replenishing, wrapped in a dressing-gown, and with slippered feet. No book beguiled the weary time—no employment made it less tedious; but there she sat—passionate longings, sad memories, and sadder anticipations making the whole sum of her being,—jealousy eating into her heart, and an indignant sense of wrong embittering every thought. There was no light gilding the edges of the dark cloud that overshadowed her—no Heavenly love softening and sanctifying earthly sorrow—no Heavenly hope elevating her above it. It was one o'clock, when her intently listening ear caught the sound of coming steps. She thought they were his—but so she had thought a hundred times that night. Now, however, she was not mistaken. He ascended the steps, she heard his night-key enter the door, but she knew it was in vain, for she had herself secured it with a bolt. She rose quickly, hastened to it, and unbolted it with eager hands; yet the light she held showed no pleasure in her face. Her eyes were swoollen with weeping, and her countenance wore an aspect of the deepest dejection.

"Why are you up at this hour, Evelyn?" asked Euston Hastings, as he closed the door and advanced into the parlor.

"It was necessary that some one should be here to open the door," she replied.

"Then where was Dixon?"

"I could not sleep till you returned, and thinking it was enough for one to be disturbed, I made him go to bed."

"I know not why you need have been disturbed, Evelyn. As to Dixon, I pay him for obeying my orders, and if he find them too onerous, he has only to leave the

place. I have no fear that I shall find any difficulty in obtaining one to fill it, who will value money more and sleep less."

"Do not be angry with Dixon. The fault has been mine. I could not rest till you came, and I preferred to sit up alone."

The last words were almost inarticulate, for Evelyn's ready tears had come as she said, "I could not rest until you came." With a gesture of impatience, Euston Hastings turned from her, and snatching one of the candles burning on the table, would have hastened from the room, but Evelyn approached him, exclaiming, "Do not leave me thus! Through the long, cold, lonely hours of night, while others slept, I have watched and waited for you, and are these cold words and colder looks to be my only reward?"

"Reward for what, Evelyn? Your watching was for no purpose of kindness to me."

"Do not speak so coldly. Have mercy on me! my heart is breaking."

"Really, Evelyn, I know not how to comfort sorrows which I do not understand."

"Love me! only love me!"

"You are making that a very difficult task, Evelyn; and I give you warning, that if you persist in your present course, it will soon become to me an impossible one."

A faint cry broke from Evelyn's lips—she threw her arms wildly up, and fell forward on the arm which Euston Hastings had extended in time to break, though too late to prevent her fall. He raised her up, and, looking into her face, found that she had fainted. Even then there was an expression rather of annoyance than of sorrow in his countenance. Laying her on a sofa, he advanced to the bell, but having only touched the wire, withdrew his hand with-

out ringing, and returning to the sofa, lifted Evelyn's light form in his arms. She had recovered partially, and said in a feeble tone, "I can walk."

"Hush, Evelyn!" he replied, "you are weary, and had better be still."

Quietly she rested her head upon his shoulder, and suffered him to bear her up stairs, and to her room, where, still enforcing silence, he withdrew her wrappings and laid her on her bed before he went to his dressing-room. Worn out by watching and agitation, Evelyn slept before he returned, yet ere she did so, she sighed at the remembrance that he had left her without one caress, or even one look of tenderness to soften the harshness of those terrible words.

The next morning Evelyn found it impossible to recur to the last night's scene. Euston Hastings was absorbed, silent, stern; and, exhausted by her late passionate excitement, she had not courage to break through the barrier within which he had intrenched himself. While they were at breakfast, a note was handed to Evelyn. It was from Mrs. Mabury, and ran thus:

"Are you doing penance for your past coquetries, dear Evelyn, or are you endeavoring to pique the world into a new fervor of admiration by your present seclusion? In either case, it seems to me it has endured sufficiently long. Besides, really, Eva, regard for your husband's reputation requires that you should show yourself in the world, which at present suspects him of being something between a Don Giovanni and a Blue-Beard. I am to have a few choice spirits with me at dinner to-day. Mr. Hastings has promised to join us. May I hope that you will accompany him? Perhaps you will go with us to Mrs. Brereton's fancy-ball. If you would like it, I will procure a card for you; and

your maid can, I dare say, get up some of your old tableau costumes for the occasion. Let me hear from you by the bearer.

"Yours,

"ESTELLE.

Evelyn read this note with no agreeable impressions. There seemed to her a patronising tone in it which, with her present feelings to Mrs. Mabury, was peculiarly distasteful. It made the thought of accepting her invitation disagreeable; yet her husband would be there, and if he really was thus talked of,—if he thought she ought to go,—he should decide for her, and on the impulse of the moment, she handed him the open note, saying, "I wish you would read that, and tell me how to reply to it."

He received the note, glanced hastily over it, and returning it to her, said, "I do not know how any one can direct your answer to that which concerns your inclination so entirely."

"There is a part of it which relates to you," said Evelyn, "and however little I may be disposed for such gay doings, if you wish—"

"I wish nothing on the subject, Evelyn, but that you should please yourself."

"But, if you think that my seclusion causes you to be misunderstood."

"Of course that is mere badinage in Mrs. Mabury," replied Euston Hastings, with a smile. "Besides, you do not suppose that I have the least respect for the *que dira-t-on?* I never expect the world to understand me, or care that it should—so pray, do not trouble yourself to go for any such reason as this."

"Then, as you do not wish me to accept the invitation, I will decline it," said Evelyn, evidently piqued by his indifference.

"Do just as you please, Evelyn. I have, as I just now told you, no wish on the subject; but allow me to ask that, if you do stay at home, it may be to sleep, and not to watch for me. The restraint which such a practice imposes on me would be intolerable. I have told Dixon this morning, that if he retire to bed again before I return home, he will do it at the expense of his place. You will not, therefore, save him by this unreasonable sacrifice of yourself."

"I had no design to save Dixon," said Evelyn, indignantly; "I could not sleep while momently expecting you."

"To prevent this evil, I should be glad to have another room prepared for me, which I may occupy whenever I return home long after you have retired. It would be well to have it ready for me to-night, if you decide to remain at home, as Mrs. Brereton's invitations are for a late hour."

This conversation had occurred during the absence of the servant, whom Evelyn had found some pretext for sending away. He now returned to say that Mrs. Mabury's man was waiting for an answer. With a trembling hand Evelyn wrote a few hurried lines, declining Mrs. Mabury's invitation on the plea of indisposition, which her now throbbing head made no fiction. Euston Hastings availed himself of the opportunity, while she wrote, to withdraw from the room, and thus avoid the scene which he anticipated as the result of his last words.

Hours after, Mary found Evelyn weeping in her chamber. She had declined seeing even her father and herself, but they would not be turned away. If she were sick, they felt there was the more necessity for their presence. She received them in her darkened room, yet both saw what it was as impossible for her to conceal as to control, that she was in tears. Mary now proved an invaluable friend both to father and daughter. She comforted the first by the assu-

rance that Evelyn was not so ill as to make her husband's immediate presence and the attendance of a physician necessary.

"Evelyn is suffering from a nervous headache, a very common complaint with ladies who keep the irregular hours of fashionable life. Leave her to me, and I do not doubt you will find her much better in a few hours."

Such was her language to Mr. Beresford, and though he sighed at the conviction that his sad anticipations were all fulfilled, and marriage had been as disastrous to the happiness of his second Evelyn as of his first, his worst apprehensions were allayed, and folding his daughter in his arms, and bidding her, with more than one kiss, "Be well and happy for his sake," he complied with Mary's wish, and left them together.

With Evelyn Mary's task was more difficult. To listen to vehement reproaches of her husband at one moment,—to as vehement self-condemnation at another,—to soothe griefs whose selfishness she could scarcely forbear to reprove,—to be asked for advice which would, she knew, be received with impatience—such was the history of this wearisome day. Evelyn found a shield against all she said that might have brought conviction of her error, in the oft-repeated "Ah, Mary! you have never loved like me."

Deeply moved by the sufferings she saw, and yet more by the sorrows she anticipated for Evelyn, Mary's pity at length so far overcame the pride and delicacy which made any reference to herself exquisitely painful to her, that, laying her hand on the head of the weeping Evelyn, she said, with inimitable grace and tenderness, "Evelyn, would my sympathy be more soothing to you, and my opinions have more influence if you thought that I had loved like you?"

"Your opinions would have more influence certainly,

Mary, for now I cannot help thinking that you often give me advice which you would know to be impracticable if you had ever loved."

"Never think so again, Evelyn, for I too have loved—loved as truly—loved as selfishly as you, and loved without return."

"Mary! can this be so?—You who are so happy!"

"Was I always happy, Evelyn?"

"No, Mary; but your unhappiness seemed to have a sufficient cause in the death of your father and your ill-health."

"My father's death was indeed a great sorrow; but though it took from earth its greatest glory, it left enough to enkindle the imagination, and keep alive the hope of one to whom life was still so new."

"And you loved, then, Mary, and loved unhappily?"

"Nay, Evelyn—I did not say unhappily; for that would seem to me to mean that I had loved unworthily. But let us say no more on this subject, Evelyn. To have named it at all, is the strongest proof of my affection for you. Remember, in future, that my advice comes to you warm—earnest—from a heart whose sympathies have been excited by a like suffering."

The silence that followed was long unbroken. Many questions were pressing to Evelyn's lips, but she dared not ask them. There was a quiet dignity about Mary which not only repressed curiosity, but silenced the expression of sympathy. In knowing that her friend had loved and suffered, Evelyn knew all that was essential to her. To her present condition no reference had been made, and though longing to learn whether the love, like the suffering, were among the things of the past, Evelyn was too truly delicate to press rudely within a veil which Mary had long worn to all, and which she had now lifted for her with such evident

and painful effort. It was Mary who resumed the conversation—at first in low and faltering tones, which grew stronger as she proceeded.

"I have learned, dear Evelyn," she said, "to think that from the *imperfection* of love springs all the wo connected with it. It is self-love writhing in agony over its disappointed desires, pride covering its deadly wound from every eye, which give birth to that 'sorrow of the world that worketh death.' The false maxims of a conventionalism which teaches that there is degradation in an unreturned affection, however worthily placed or purely entertained, may press us to the earth with shame; but when we discard these,—when our love is unspoken, not from pride, but because we would not fetter the freedom of its object by a wish,—when it is so divorced from selfishness that we can pray for the happiness of the one beloved, independently of us—then we first learn its true nature—its life-giving, joyous nature."

"But, Mary, the love, the sorrow you have described still lack the bitterest ingredient of mine. You cannot know the misery of a slighted wife. I have given him all, all—nothing was too dear—nothing too sacred to be laid at his feet, and he has trampled on all. Can you bid me be careless of such wo—joyful under such circumstances?"

"No—no—Evelyn. I would only pray you and aid you, if I might, more and more to forget yourself and your own blighted hopes, and to seek your own enjoyment in ministering to the chosen pleasures, if those pleasures be sinless, of the object of your affection. In such a course of action, Evelyn, you cannot fail to meet your reward."

"How can I influence his enjoyments? Has he not withdrawn himself completely from me?"

"And why has he withdrawn, Evelyn? Has it not been because you did influence his enjoyments, and influence

them unfavorably? Promote them, and you may win him back to you."

While Mary spoke, Evelyn was soothed by new hope, but in her absence her words were powerless, and again, madly yielding to the passion of the moment, she wearied her husband by her importunities or repulsed him by her coldness.

Throughout this period Mrs. Mabury had exercised towards Euston Hastings the most consummate and unfailing tact. The wisdom which had deserted her at Saratoga, when she perceived herself to be on the losing side, was again all her own. Her house presented the most varied attractions. Without seeking his confidence, she seemed intuitively to divine his feelings, and adapted herself to the mood of the moment with the perfection of art. Never had she been so eager in her desire to attract—to win. Her pride had received a wound even deeper than that inflicted on her affections, in his marriage with Evelyn, and in his renewed devotion to herself it found its only balm. Thus far she had proceeded with a total disregard of consequences, but now the question, "What would be the end of all this?" sometimes obtruded itself startlingly upon her. To forestall the possibility of inconstancy on his part, and withdraw from him while his devotion was at its height, would have been a meet punishment for his past coldness—a meet triumph to her pride; but other passions were awake within her, which represented the triumph as too costly a purchase. Yet reason asked, How could she trust to him—capricious as he had proved himself—inconstant alike to her and Evelyn?

About this time the lawsuit, which had occasioned Mrs. Mabury's return to America, was decided in her favor. With the announcement of her success there came to her a thought like a flashing light—"I will return to Europe.

This connection is becoming dangerous to him and to me. I will leave him." Such were the motives she confessed to herself; but another, a deeper, and a more powerful voice within her repeated ever, "He will follow me. He will leave all and follow me, and my pride and my love will alike triumph."

It was the evening of the day on which her success had been announced, and Euston Hastings sat with Mrs. Mabury alone in her boudoir. They had been, as they often were when thus alone, long silent, full of thoughts probably which neither was yet prepared to communicate to the other. A heavy sigh from Mrs. Mabury aroused her companion from a long revery.

"You sigh, Estelle! You whom all are congratulating!" he said.

"Ah, Euston! They congratulate me on an accession of wealth which I do not need, and I sigh at the thought of leaving a land to which I came reluctantly, and where I have known little pleasure. Such is life!"

"Leaving! Do you think of leaving America?"

"Could you suppose that I would remain a moment longer than was demanded by my interests, where the whole structure of society, the whole style of thought and feeling were so opposed to all which make life endurable to me? I go to solace myself for the disappointments which actual life has brought me in the very home of the ideal. I go to the very birthplace of beauty—to the blue seas and gorgeous skies, and vine-clad hills of Italy—to the forms which Genius proved its Divinity in creating—to the sounds which 'take the prisoned soul and lap it in Elysium.' You look at me with surprise—you knew not that I turned with such intense longing to that land; but how can it be otherwise, when I hope to win from it life's last good—for me its only one—forgetful-

ness. I go to lose my own identity in the beauty and the brightness around me."

"To lose your own identity! And where will you find another self so beautiful and bright? I too, Estelle, am weary of my present life. I too, long for the repose which I once enjoyed with you in that delightful land. I will go with you."

Mrs. Mabury trembled—she felt all which those words involved, and it was by a mighty effort that she commanded her voice to utter, with seeming composure, the words, "And Evelyn?"

"Speak not of her, Estelle! There is no repose for me where she is. It is from her I would fly; and why should I not—in what would she be more miserable than she now is? She weeps and complains now—she could but weep and complain then, and with the benefit of a larger audience—the world instead of me."

"And that world!—what will be its verdict?"

"Can you think of that, Estelle? Is the world more to you than your friend?"

"It was of you I thought, not of myself."

"And do you not know, Estelle, how little I regard the world or its opinions?"

"May not other years bring other thoughts?"

"Never—with you by my side, I shall have no place for regret."

"I doubt not it seems so to you now, but when your present feelings have passed away—"

"They never can pass away. I never have exhausted, I never can exhaust the variety of your attractions. The tie which will unite us, Estelle, will be more tender than friendship—more serene than love."

"That it may be so, Euston, it must be formed deliberately—free from the impetuosity of passion. Let me go

abroad, therefore, as I had intended, alone; then weigh well all which you relinquish in coming to me, and decide, uninfluenced by my presence. I will await your decision in Havre, ready to welcome you to your life-friend, or—" she paused, but only for a moment; "or to pursue my present plans."

Well did Mrs. Mabury understand the nature to which she addressed herself; this perfect freedom was the most certain means of securing a heart which the lightest constraint revolted.

"Generous Estelle!" exclaimed Euston Hastings. "How unlike the rest of your exacting sex! It shall be as you will. But be assured that I will follow you in the first packet which sails after you to Havre or London."

In less than a month, Mrs. Mabury had arranged her business in New York, and left the shores of America forever—to the great regret of Madame L'Egaré, and the at least equal joy of Evelyn. Mrs. Mabury had avoided a meeting with the latter, by calling on her at a time when Euston Hastings had informed her that she would not be at home.

After the departure of Mrs. Mabury, Mary reminded Evelyn of her jealous apprehensions, and drew from their apparent falsehood, an augury of hope for the future.

And it might have been that Evelyn's destiny was yet in her own power—for as the day, the very hour of his departure drew near, Euston Hastings felt that all the cords by which she had been bound to his heart, were not yet severed. When he bent above her in her placid sleep, or caught, for a passing moment, some gleam of the spirit of joyous love which formerly lived in her life, throwing a brief light upon her face, he felt, that were she ever thus, it would be impossible to leave her.

But in general, offended by the gravity of his manner,

which she attributed to sadness for Mrs. Mabury's departure—too passionate to soothe—too self-absorbed to excuse a grief which she did not share—Evelyn was gloomy, and wore an indignant and repelling aspect.

About a fortnight after Mrs. Mabury's departure, Euston Hastings went abroad immediately after breakfast, and did not return home till after four o'clock in the afternoon. Evelyn, too, had been out in her carriage in the morning, and had made some calls. Fatigued by the unusual exertion, she lay down upon the sofa in her own *boudoir* and slept.

Not long had she been thus unconscious when the door opened noiselessly, and Euston Hastings, with his quiet step, entered. All arrangements were made for his sailing on the morrow, and he was now in his home in New York for the last time. From a lingering tenderness to Evelyn, the strength of which surprised himself, he found it impossible to go, as he had at first intended, without seeing her, though to what purpose the interview could tend, it was not easy to imagine. He entered as we have said, and stood beside her couch. Directly opposite to him, hung a picture of Evelyn, taken just before her marriage. It represented her as she was at that happy season, in the full flush of joyful hope. The eyes of Euston Hastings became riveted upon it, and memory with her rapid pencil sketched upon that canvass other forms and far different scenes. He recalled all the circumstances attending those sittings at which he had presided, the very words—his whispered words—which had called to her cheek the blush, and to her lips the smile, which the painter had so happily caught and perpetuated there. He turned from the picture to the sleeper at his side, and how different was the expression on that pale, still face! An unwonted moisture sprang to his eyes, and he walked to a distant window, and looked out

for some time. When he turned back into the room, his countenance wore its usual aspect of cold decision, and seating himself at a table, he wrote with his pencil on a card,

"I came to bid you good-night, Evelyn, as I am going out of town; but you are asleep, and I will not awake you. You shall hear from me to-morrow"—he paused, and after a moment of evidently careful thought, crossed the last word and substituted—"the day after to-morrow. Till then, adieu."

He laid the card in a conspicuous position on the table, and would have passed directly to the door, but involuntarily his eyes again rested on that sleeping form. It was the last time it would ever be seen by him, and he approached and gazed with deepening tenderness on the lovely face of the unconscious slumberer. His good angel stood beside him in that hour, and whispered how soon the act he meditated would change its placid expression into the wild agony of hopeless sorrow, or set upon it the seal of death. But his iron will was already cast, and he prepared to execute it, though not without a pang which he condemned as weakness. Bending over Evelyn, he pressed his lips upon the curls that lay upon her pillow, and murmured almost unconsciously—"Poor child! Poor child! I hope she will be happy yet. I did not know till now how much I still loved her"—yet once more he bent down and lightly kissed her brow, then resolutely turned away. His good angel had departed. He came back no more.

To those murmured words, to that last light kiss, Evelyn had been conscious, though, fearing by a word, a look, to break the spell which had awakened such unusual tenderness, she did not stir. She knew that he had left the room—probably, she thought, to prepare for dinner—and still she lay thinking over those blessed words, that light,

yet tender pressure, and dreaming happy dreams of the future. At length, about half an hour after he had left her, she arose, and then for the first time saw and read the card he had placed on the table. Disappointed that they should not meet to-night, she rang the bell, and inquired of the servant who presented himself, "if Mr. Hastings was gone."

"Yes, ma'am, he just drove off."

"Was Dixon with him?"

"Yes, ma'am."

She would have questioned farther, but checked by the awkwardness of appearing to a servant so ignorant of her husband's movements, after a moment's hesitation she dismissed the man, and prepared with happier feelings than she had long known, for a lonely evening and night. "I did not know till now how much I still loved her," were words ever in her thoughts.

In the mean time Euston Hastings had ascended from Evelyn's boudoir to his own apartment, and rung the bell for Dixon.

"Well, Dixon," he said, on the man's appearance, "have you decided to go with me, and give up America? You understand that I have no expectation of returning here."

"It is not that, sir, that I mind. I would rather go with you than live here with anybody else; but, to tell you the truth, sir,—I hope, sir, you won't be angry with me for the truth."

"Certainly not, Dixon; I have spoken to you as a master seldom speaks, and I am ready to hear all you have to say. It is a privilege earned by long and faithful service."

"Thank you, sir; I'm sure you're very kind to me, as you always has been, and I'm sure I wouldn't mind going with you to the land's end or the world's end either, if Mrs. Hastings was going with you—"

"Then you prefer Mrs. Hastings' service to mine," said Euston Hastings, reddening.

"Oh no, sir! that isn't it, but—I am only a servant, sir, and maybe I oughtn't to say it—but I'm afraid, sir, you're not doing right by her."

The words were spoken and could not be recalled, though the lowering of Euston Hastings' brow made Dixon tremble at the thought of his own boldness.

"You are presuming on my indulgence, sir," said Euston Hastings.

Dixon would have apologized.

"Not another word, sir," sternly interrupted Euston Hastings. "Put the things, of which I spoke to you this morning, in the valise in my dressing-room, and then come to me."

As Dixon entered the dressing-room, Euston Hastings turned to an *escritoire* near which he stood, and unlocking it, took out a letter over which he glanced hastily.

"I almost wish it were not quite so cold," he said to himself; "but it may be better for her that it is so—it *will* be better for her—it is the truer kindness. And now to rid myself quietly of Dixon, and to make such an arrangement for this letter that she will not receive it till to-morrow, or—yet better—the day after."

After some moments more of seemingly perplexed thought, he seated himself at the *escritoire*, wrote a few lines on another sheet of paper, folded it, and sealing that he had just read, enclosed them both in one envelope, which he addressed to J. G. Dunlap, Esq., ——— Chestnut-street, Philadelphia. Before he had concluded Dixon stood beside him, but he did not appear to notice him till the envelope was sealed and addressed, then turning to him, he said with his usual quietness of manner, "You must go to Philadelphia immediately, Dixon. I have a letter here for Mr. Dunlap, which I am

not willing to trust to the mail. You will need no preparation," he added, as Dixon began to say something of getting ready—"as you will return without the delay of an hour. Take my valise to the carriage, and I will drive with you to the boat, for you have not a moment to spare."

Accustomed to implicit obedience, there was no hesitation in Dixon's movements, whatever there might have been in his mind. Arrived at the boat, Euston Hastings charged him to return as rapidly as possible after seeing Mr. Dunlap, and to lose no time, on his arrival in New York, in delivering the letter with which that gentleman would probably charge him. At the last moment, summoning all his courage, Dixon said, "I hope, sir, you won't be angry with me for what I was saying this afternoon—"

"You must leave that subject till you come back, Dixon; there is no time to talk of it now, for the boat is ringing her last bell. Good-by."

Dixon touched his hat and hurried on board. He was just in time. In another second the paddles were in motion, and the boat left the dock. Euston Hastings gave one sigh to the faithful though humble friend of more than twenty years. Already he began to feel that the path in which he had resolved to walk free from all restraint, was not without thorns. But his resolution was not shaken.

"To Bunker's," he cried to the coachman, and there he was soon set down.

The next morning at ten o'clock he stood upon the deck of a London Packet, with his eyes fixed upon the rapidly-receding panorama of New York, and with many emotions swelling at his heart. Among these emotions, an exhilarating sense of freedom, and regret for the desolation which he had brought upon Evelyn's life, contended for mastery.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Ah me! what news?—why dost thou wring thy hands?"
SHAKSPEARE.

THE traveller to Philadelphia moved not at that time with railroad speed, and Dixon did not arrive there till noon of the day after he left New York. Mr. Dunlap was at home. He received the letter from him, and read with some surprise the following lines:

"DEAR DUNLAP,—

"The bearer was, for special reasons of my own, somewhat in my way in New York. Before he can return, his presence will be no longer hurtful, so that you will oblige me by sending him immediately back with the letter which you will find in the same envelope with yours. Charge him to be careful of that letter, and deliver it directly on his arrival. It is addressed to Mrs. Hastings, as you will perceive. I shall have sailed for Europe before he returns. This I do not wish him to know. Impress on him the importance of care and expedition.

"Can I do any thing for you abroad? If I can, command me through our old Paris banker. I write in such haste as to have no time for explanations.

"Yours,

"EUSTON HASTINGS."

This seemed a very strange proceeding to Mr. Dunlap; but Dixon, who was a man of much natural shrewdness,

had arrived at very correct conclusions, before he reached New York again, in relation to his master's designs. The letter to Mrs. Hastings in his master's hand, with which he was well acquainted, revealed to him the whole object of his journey. He doubted not that he had already sailed, and that this letter would announce to Mrs. Hastings his departure.

"She'll never be able to stand it, for though she used to worry him with her womanish ways, she loved the very dirt he walked on. If she had only known how to manage him as well as I did! But the worst of all is to think that he's gone to that proud minx—for I know he's gone to her just as well as if I seen them together."

Such were the musings of Dixon as he approached New York; but all other thoughts vanished before the one overpowering apprehension of the misery he was about to inflict on Evelyn, as he came in sight of the house in which she was.

"She ought to have somebody with her, poor thing! It may kill her outright to read it all alone there, and I shall feel as if I had murdered her. I have a great mind to go for her father and Miss Raymond, before I give it to her."

The result of these reflections was, that Dixon went to the stable, and finding there only the carriage-horses of Mrs. Hastings, mounted one of these, and urging him to his utmost speed, rode rapidly out to Beresford Hall.

Mary and Mr. Beresford were at dinner when he was announced, but this did not prevent their seeing him immediately. Dixon had arranged with himself his whole plan of action before his arrival at Beresford Hall, but at the time he most needed it, his self-possession had most completely deserted him. He grew pale, and trembled as he found himself in the presence of the father to whom he

was to announce the desertion of his daughter. And then, for the first time, a doubt occurred to him, and he asked himself, should his master not have gone, should he have relinquished his design to go—a possible event—how would he meet his anger, for the development he was about to make? Oppressed by these thoughts, he hesitated, stammered, and gave such a confused account of his motives for wishing them to go into the city, that Mary pitied him as mad, and Mr. Beresford was angry with him as intoxicated. At length he found it necessary to produce the letter of which he was the bearer, in order to give any color of truth to his assertion that his master was away, and that he was afraid Mrs. Hastings was going to hear some bad news of him. All Mr. Beresford's questions could extract no more from him—he could or would give no reason for thinking this; yet even with such disadvantages, his earnestness, as he entreated them to go to Mrs. Hastings, now, when she was probably to endure the greatest trial of her life, compelled the attention of those to whom he spoke.

"I am as sober as you, or any man could be, Mr. Beresford," he said; "I cannot say more to you, because I may be all wrong in what I think, and then my master would have good reason to blame me; but surely, sir, it is not a great deal to ask you to ride into the city to your own child, when she may be going to have a great trouble fall on her."

"Let us go," said Mary, rising from table, and ringing for her bonnet and shawl. Mr. Beresford's heart had already pronounced the same sentence, and in a few minutes they were on the road, accompanied by Dixon. As they were entering the street in which Evelyn resided, Dixon rode up to the carriage-door, and touching his hat, seemed to invite a conference.

Mr. Beresford ordered his coachman to stop, and then, in a dry, short tone, indicating the reluctance with which he placed himself under the guidance of a servant, said. "Well, sir!"

"Mrs. Hastings thinks I am with my master, sir, and I was afraid it might startle her to see me coming along with you and Miss Raymond; so, if you please to go in first, sir, just as if nothing was the matter, I would come in soon after you with the letter, and she would never suspect any thing."

It did not require a moment's reflection to show the propriety of this suggestion, and Mr. Beresford assented to it at once.

"Go in just as if nothing was the matter!"—easy in speech, but how impossible in performance!—how impossible for Mr. Beresford and Mary, whose hearts were chilled by vague terror! They found Evelyn alone in the same room in which Euston Hastings had last seen her. This room had become a little paradise to Evelyn since that interview.

"Where is Mr. Hastings?" asked Mr. Beresford, after their first greeting.

"I scarcely know. He left me the day before yesterday—but I shall see or hear from him before night."

"But how comes it that you do not know where he is gone?" asked Mr. Beresford, to whom, for the first time, the idea of a duel suggested itself.

"I was asleep when he came to say good-by, and he wrote his adieu, saying, that I should see or hear from him to-day—it is time, I think."

At this moment there was a knock on the door. Mary started as if a cannon had been fired at her side, and Mr. Beresford turned pale, while the rich coloring of hope dyed the cheeks of Evelyn, as she cried in a quick, eager tone, "Come in."

It was Dixon. His pallor, his trembling hand, would at another time have inspired Evelyn with the most dire apprehension; but now her pulses were all tuned to joy, and she saw only the letter which he held to her. The sight of this gave her some disappointment. "Then Mr. Hastings has not come," she said, as she received it, in the tone of a spoiled child who had lost her favorite toy. "Wait a moment, Dixon;" and without apology to her father or Mary, without remembering their presence, she broke the seal of her letter.

Their eyes—Dixon's—were riveted upon her. They saw her glance eagerly over the first few lines, then turn back and read them more slowly, while the color faded from her cheeks, her lips, leaving her startlingly pale. Suddenly she looked up, and met their sympathizing countenances. They seemed to bring her conviction of the reality of that which might else have seemed but as a hideous dream. She stretched out her arms, took one tottering step towards her father, and ere he could reach her, fell with a faint cry at his feet. With Dixon's aid, Mr. Beresford placed her on the couch on which she had so lately dreamed those blessed dreams. The letter had fallen on the floor, and while Mary busied herself with the unconscious Evelyn, Mr. Beresford raised it thence, and with a mingling of bitter anguish and hot anger which it would defy all language to express, read the following lines:

"When this letter is delivered to you, Evelyn, I shall be once more a free man, having bidden adieu to you and to America forever. You will have no right to complain of this, as you were aware, when you gave yourself to me, that, as marriage was regarded by me, it could exercise no restraint upon my will. Knowing, however, that you are not very logical in your conclusions where your feelings are interested, I doubt not that you will esteem yourself the most

injured of women,—that you will fill earth with your complaints, and call down the vengeance of Heaven on my devoted head. As I care little for the first, and have less dread of the last, I shall offer no protest against this; yet the regard which, spite of the past, I still retain for you, and a feeling of obligation of which, weak as I consider it, I cannot, at this parting moment, wholly divest myself, prompt me to do you the real service of pointing out to you the true causes of your unhappiness. These, Evelyn, have one common source—YOUR SELFISHNESS. I startle you; for you have been accustomed to think yourself the most generous of women, because you were ready to yield your fortune, your services, your opinions, yourself, to gratify your friends or your lover. But why were these lavish concessions made, Evelyn? Was it not as means to an end—and what end? I answer, the binding them to you in person and heart and mind—the enslaving them, not only in action, but in thought and feeling. You know that I make no pretence of what fools call generosity—disinterestedness; I do not believe in its existence. I seek my own enjoyment, and I make others subserve my interests; but there is this difference between us—I win them to my will, making them find their own pleasure in advancing mine, and ceasing to desire their service when it seems constrained; while if you cannot win you will constrain it, and if you cannot do either, you will punish, if it be possible, him who withholds it. Such has been your course with me, and I will not stay to be punished.

"Henceforth, taught by you the dangers which attend more captivating forms of character, my companion shall be, like myself, of the *laisser-aller* school,—one who will glide with me gently and quietly along the stream of life, seeking only to attract, not to bind me, and who, should some more powerful magnet draw me from her side, will neither wash

her pleasing image from my memory by tears, nor darken it by frowns.

"Had you been such, Evelyn, we should not probably have separated; for even had you ceased to be necessary to me, you would still have been agreeable—and though I might not always have found it impossible to do without you, it would have continued very possible to live with you.

"It is useless, however, to waste the present in reflections on what might have been, but cannot now be. Our connection is at an end. I sincerely regret that I cannot free you from the legal tie by which you are at present fettered. In seven years, however, you will be free—you will still be young, and if you profit by the hints I have now given you, the happiest part of your life will be before you. Should you desire to form another connection at an earlier period, I will do all in my power to facilitate your obtaining a divorce.

"I sincerely hope that you will at last learn to enjoy life, and that your peace will be henceforth disturbed by no painful remembrance of,

"Yours, very truly,

"E. Hastings."

"And where is Mrs. Hastings?" asked Everard Irving, when he had heard as much of this history as Mr. Manelli could detail to him.

"At her own house," was the reply. "She resists all her father's persuasions to her to return to Beresford Hall—resents bitterly his first natural expressions of anger against the husband, who has deserted her, and seems more anxious to guard from injury the slight link which still connects her with Mr. Hastings, than to preserve the affection, or reward the kindness of any other friend. Miss Raymond seems very anxious about both the father and the daughter.

Mr. Beresford, she says, seems many years older in the last two or three months; and Mrs. Hastings, she thinks, has always a fever, yet she will see no physician, and seems impatient even of the daily visits of her father and herself. She has told me that she would not be at all surprised if she should follow her husband to Europe."

Everard started—a sudden light flashed upon him.

"Had not Mr. Hastings a servant named Dixon?" he asked.

"Yes; and, as he did not carry him, he has continued to live with Mrs. Hastings, who seems to prefer his attendance to that of any other person—probably because she associates him in her mind with her husband."

"She has gone to Europe—I am sure she has. She went on board the steamboat as I stepped on shore this morning; even then the tones of the muffled figure reminded me of her—and that man, Dixon, was with her. Let us go to her house and see if it be not so."

Before Everard had ceased speaking, Mr. Manelli was on his feet, and they hurried away to —— Place, scarcely exchanging a word as they went. A carriage stood at the door of the house they sought. It aroused Everard to a consciousness of the awkwardness of his position, should his suspicions prove incorrect. What apology could he offer to Evelyn for intruding himself upon her, or even for leaving his name at her door, should she be at home, and yet decline to see him? The peculiarity of her position as a deserted wife, and the terms on which they had parted, would render any presentation of himself to her, at this time, highly improper. Under the influence of such thoughts, he hesitated; and Mr. Manelli, unconscious of his doubts, stepped before him and rang the bell. The door was opened, but not by a servant. It was Mary Raymond, pale and agitated, who stood there; Everard saw her and sprang forward.

"Mary!"—"Everard!" was all they said, but the color which rose quickly into her pale cheek, and the eager clasp of his hand, told that theirs was no common meeting. The next moment, Mary had forgotten her joy in the sorrow of others.

"Everard, you have come at a sad time. Evelyn—"

"Has sailed for Europe."

"How have you heard that?"

"I landed at the moment that she was going on board the steamboat which was to take her to the Duchesse D'Orleans. I stood close beside her, and though she was so muffled that it was impossible to recognise her, I was strongly reminded of her by the tones in which she addressed the servant with her. She called him Dixon."

"Yes—yes: I have no doubt he has encouraged her in this worse than madness."

"Call it not so, my dear child," said Mr. Manelli; "it is not what our reason would have advised, certainly, but there is a kind of intuition about you women—it seems an inspiration sometimes—which is a surer guide than reason; it may be that this is the best thing she can do."

"God grant it! but it is hard to look at her poor father, and believe that good can come of it. I fear it will prove a death-stroke to him. But come in and see him—perhaps your voice, Everard, may arouse him."

They entered a parlor, and Everard followed Mary to the side of a couch, on which lay Mr. Beresford with closed eyes, and very pale, breathing heavily.

"How long has this been?" he exclaimed, both shocked and distressed.

"About an hour. On our arrival here the servants crowded around us, each eager to tell that Evelyn had left home this morning attended by Dixon, and taking with her considerable baggage, and had not yet returned. Mr. Beres-

ford strove to question them, but strove in vain; his articulation failed, and after two or three vain efforts, pressing his hand to his forehead, he tottered, and would have fallen but for the timely aid of those around him. I sent for his physician immediately, and was expecting him when you arrived. But speak to him, Everard."

"Mr. Beresford!" said Everard, in the subdued tone of one awe-struck by such sudden calamity.

"Speak louder," said the agitated Mary. "Speak to him of Evelyn."

"Mr. Beresford, I have seen your daughter."

"Say Evelyn."

"I have seen your daughter, Evelyn," repeated Everard; but the words fell evidently on unconscious ears.

"This is dreadful!" said Everard.

"Poor Evelyn! Poor Evelyn!—what has she yet to endure?" cried Mary, with streaming tears.

Physician and friends soon gathered around Mr. Beresford. He had been ever a kind-hearted man, sharing with all within his reach the good gifts with which Providence had endowed him, and now many hearts sympathized with his sorrow. And well might it awaken sympathy to see the man of strong frame and clear mind bowed to the feebleness of childhood. When a fortnight had passed away after his first attack, though he had so far recovered as to recognise Everard and welcome him home, to show a preference for Mary's society and nursing over that of any other person, and to evince a very determinate will on one subject at least, it was evident to all that a great change had passed over his being. The erect form and firm step of middle life had given place in him to the bowed figure and tottering movements of age; scarce a shade of darker color appeared now amid the snowy whiteness of his hair, and his countenance wore that indescribable expression of

weakness by which the old appeal so touchingly to the sympathies of the young. On one subject, as we have said, he evinced the most determined will,—this was to follow Evelyn abroad, and persuade, or, if necessary, compel her return with him to America.

"We have hitherto kept him quiet by assuring him there was no packet about to sail, but this we cannot long say with truth; and deception, were we willing to practise it, has become impossible, since he now sees the papers and examines the advertisements for himself. What can we do?" asked Mary of Dr. Huntly.

"Let him go by the first packet that sails. Change of scene, constant gentle exercise, and an object to interest his feelings and attract him on—these are the very conditions most favorable to his recovery, and these he will have in travelling after Evelyn."

"But how can he travel in his present feeble state?"

"Very well—with a good servant, and such a nurse as you are—you will go with him, of course."

Mary did not answer. Everard was present; and, as the physician so quietly pronounced the sentence which would send her abroad for probably a year or more, she involuntarily looked towards him. His eyes were fixed upon her with an expression which she never saw in them before: it was one which made her quickly avert her glance; she did not, therefore, see the flush which rose to his brow, nor the embarrassment with which he turned away to a window near. He stood there, leaning against the casement, till the physician had gone, and then, while Mary was hesitating whether to leave him or remain, he approached her and said—

"You must not go alone with Mr. Beresford, Mary. Dr. Huntly does not consider you sufficiently—you must have a friend and protector as well as a servant. It would

be my—if it were possible, I—Mr. Manelli, I mean,—do you not think he would go with you?"

"Perhaps he would," said Mary, languidly, and with a feeling of disappointment which she could not altogether control.

"Shall I speak to him for you?" asked Everard.

"If you please."

And so they parted, more coldly than they had done of late, with feelings on the part of each which the other little suspected. Before they met again, all arrangements had been made for Mary's accompanying Mr. Beresford; Mr. Manelli having consented cheerfully to go with them, when assured that Aspasié would have all which her present position demanded, in the society of an elderly lady, a friend of Mr. Beresford, who had taken lodgings with her, and in the protection and kindly offices of Everard. Still many delays occurred—first, from increased illness in Mr. Beresford, and then from unexpected difficulties in the arrangement of business which he could not leave in an unsettled state; and it was the latter part of July, nearly three months after Evelyn's departure, before they sailed.

Mary's last day in America was spent at Beresford Hall, whither Mr. Beresford had refused to return from some of those unaccountable caprices which often mark, more sadly than any physical change, the influence of disease. Having completed the arrangements which had brought her there before the hour at which she had ordered the carriage, and finding the sense of loneliness within the house oppressive, she walked out. Everard Irving arrived soon after with a message from Mr. Beresford, respecting certain papers which Mary was to bring to him, and having learned in what direction she had gone, he followed her, and found her standing at the river's brink, almost on the spot where he had breathed his first vows of love in Evelyn's ear. The associations with the place made them both silent. Each would

gladly have been elsewhere, yet there was a certain consciousness about each which checked an avowal of this feeling. Everard was the first to throw off this awkward restraint. After several feeble efforts to sustain conversation on other subjects, he suddenly exclaimed, "Poor Evelyn! how present she is to me in this scene as I once saw her here! It was here I first told her that I loved! How difficult it is to realize that two years have changed the gay, light-hearted songstress of that happy evening into a deserted, heart-broken wife! Not such was the fate which my heart then promised her."

He spoke calmly though earnestly. Mary was more agitated.

"Pardon me, Everard," she said, "that I did not think sooner how painful this scene must be to you—let us leave it."

"Not yet, Mary," he replied, as he took the hand she had laid upon his arm. "I should be glad to have you understand me better on this subject than I think you do, before we part. The regret which this scene awakens, is for Evelyn only. Did she stand before me now, free as she was then in heart and hand, I would not seek to make her mine. And yet, Mary, I loved her truly—but it was the love of an untried boy ignorant of the necessities of his own nature, though with sensibility enough to feel the beauty and grace of hers. Two years have worked on me the change of ten. I now understand myself, and I need in the object of my life's devotion—but it is no matter what I need," he said, suddenly dropping her hand, and changing with startling abruptness his tone of earnest feeling for one of badinage—"the law must be my mistress for some years to come at least."

"Not necessarily, Everard. Nay, permit me to say what I have only wanted an opportunity to say before—it is but

to ask, that you will give my fortune value in my eyes by letting it procure for me the pleasure of promoting your happiness, whenever fortune can do this."

"Thank you! Thank you, Mary—this was what I knew I might expect from you, and I frankly promise you, that should I be compelled to look out of myself for the supply of a want, it shall be to you; but of this I have little fear if my health continue. Already, through the kindness of some of those friends to whom your father introduced me here, and to whom on my arrival in May I made known my change of fortune, and my desire for employment, I have obtained some business; and should you stay away two years—so quickly are character and fortune gained in our country—I hope to be found by you in the enjoyment of an income sufficient for all reasonable wants."

"In two years! you are sanguine."

"I may be, for it is my nature; but of one thing I am assured—one thing I have already gained—an object in life—a work,—farewell to ennui and all its train of horrors! I tell you truly, Mary, I would not, for the fortune I have lost, be again as I was a few months since, an idle man—an unconnected atom in the universe, blown hither and thither by every wind of impulse."

"I rejoice that you have found the true secret of happiness—a work for noble ends."

"For noble ends! Ah, there you stepped beyond my limits. As yet, my work must be for the ignoble end of satisfying my own natural wants—nothing else could have set me to work, I fear—nothing else perhaps could now keep me to work; but higher motives may succeed."

"They will, Everard—they will. You were not made to forget the wants of a world in your own."

Mary's face was radiant with lofty feelings, and Everard gazed upon her with undisguised admiration, as he ex-

claimed, "Ah, Mary! could I have you ever at my side, attracting me from sordid, earthly cares, to a purer, a heavenlier sphere—"

"If ye please, ma'am, John says it's past six o'clock, an' the carriage has been a waitin' for ye half an hour an' more," was said at their side in a brogue which left no doubt of the country of the speaker.

Mary sighed—Everard bit his lips with vexation, feeling more than half ashamed of the enthusiasm into which he had been betrayed, and both turned sadly and silently to the house. The next day, while one was poring over the authorities necessary to establish a disputed point in law, the other was becoming acquainted, for the first time, with the dread sublimities of ocean.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Oft expectation fails, and most oft there
Where most it promises ——"

SHAKSPEARE

"The mask is off—the charm is wrought—
And dearer seems each dawning smile
For having lost its light awhile."

MOORE.

EUSTON HASTINGS was once more beneath the clear, warm skies of Italy—that land in which it had seemed to him, while distant from it, that,

"—— But to breathe, but to live,
Was worth the best joy that life elsewhere could give;"

and yet there lay a deeper shadow on his brow, and his heart was more unresting than ever.

And Mrs. Mabury? One brief flash of triumph when Euston Hastings stood beside her, and she felt that she had won him from the world—had been followed by the darkness of midnight as she discovered, that, with all her power, she still failed to fill the restless void in the heart of him to whom she would have been as the one object in the universe.

Ever thus is repeated with each of us, the trial and the sin of our first mother. Ever does God place us anew in a fair world, surround us by objects of delight, and say to us—"All these good and beautiful things are thine, but of this tree eat not;" and still do we, unwarned by example,

untaught by precept, turn unthankfully from all else, and fasten eye and heart upon the forbidden fruit. We pluck and eat, and then our eyes are opened, and we see that we have despised good and chosen evil; and we are driven forth from the Paradise in which God visited us, and good angels communed with our spirits. Those gates may never open to us again; yet, blessed be God!—for him who recognises with humility the evil of his choice, and who bows humbly to his Father's chastening, there shall arise a new heaven and a new earth.

The proud nature of Mrs. Mabury, chafed by the conviction that in permitting Euston Hastings to become her constant companion, she had betrayed to him his power over her, grew watchful of his every word and look. Ever fearing estrangement, or fancying slight, she had in a few weeks convinced him, that the bonds enforced by social law and religious obligation are rarely so onerous as those which we forge for ourselves, and which we wear only by our own wills.

It was June, and the setting sun poured its beams upon a terraced garden of the Eternal City, where fountains, guarded by forms of beauty, gleamed through the dark, polished green of the orange and lemon, and fed with their bright, pure waters beds of roses and violets. Within a room, whose windows commanded this enchanting scene, sat Mrs. Mabury, alone. She had been reading, but the book now lay upon her lap, with one hand resting on the page which she had last read—the other hanging listlessly down. Her eyes were turned toward the garden, yet it was easy to see that she saw it not: she seemed to be looking far beyond it, into the vacant air,—peopling it probably with images of her own creation. As she sat thus, the door opened, and Euston Hastings entered. It might have been thought that his step was unheard by her, but for

the deepening of the flush upon her cheek. She did not stir even when he drew near enough to take her hand, and press it to his lips. The hand relinquished, fell again to her side as lifelessly as if it were something over which she had no control.

"Of what are you dreaming, Estelle?" he asked.

Slowly, and as if with effort, she turned to him as she said, "Of the past."

"That is treason to love, which knows no time but the present."

"The brightness of the present is, with me, but a reflection from the past."

Euston Hastings was silent for a while, then bending down, he read the title of the book on her knee. It was the Italy of Rogers.

"I have been reading the story of Ginevra," said Mrs. Mabury.

"And it has made you sad."

"On the contrary, I thought it enviable to die as she did, when life and love were in their glorious noon."

"You think it easier then to leave the world when all around you is bright and glorious?"

"Easier—far easier than to watch the brightness and the glory fading away, till nothing is left you but memory, and you sometimes question whether that be not a delusion."

"But must it be thus? may we not hope, that in some happy cases, the sun of life and love remain undimmed to the last?"

"That cannot be; for how can love and life remain undimmed within the shadow of the grave?"

"The shadow of the grave!—Are we not evermore in that?"

A more spiritual faith would have taught Mrs. Mabury,

that love is often brightest in that shadow, as stars shine with most brilliancy in the darkest nights.

"At least, Estelle," resumed Euston Hastings, after a few moments of thoughtful silence, "we will not court that gloomy shadow to our thoughts,—let us rather seize every enjoyment that life offers us beyond its circle."

Mrs. Mabury did not answer; but after some time, with more animation of manner than she had hitherto evinced, she said—"I have determined to go to-morrow with Monsieur and Madame ——, to Florence; will you accompany us?"

"I cannot, Estelle."

"Say, rather, you will not."

The face of Euston Hastings flushed as in anger, yet he replied in mild tones, "No; my will would lead me to go with you, were it not controlled by other considerations. I hope you will think better of this, and remain till I can go."

"I have already said I would go, and I cannot now withdraw from the party without better reasons than I have to give for my change of purpose. It would hardly suit me to say that I could not leave you at the very time that you are evincing your indifference to my society."

"Allow me to say, Estelle, that you do not state this question quite fairly. I told you always, from the first proposal of this journey to Florence, that I could not leave Rome yet for some weeks; and it was not till after I had said this that you seemed inspired by so strong a desire to visit Florence at this particular time. Had I known this wish sooner, I would have made my own arrangements to correspond with it."

"I should have been sorry in any degree to interfere with your arrangements. You can join me when it suits your convenience, unless a new caprice should have sent me off

from Florence before that time. But ought we not to prepare for the Cardinal's?"

Who that had seen Mrs. Mabury that evening, as splendidly dressed she moved the queen of the festive scene,—who that listened to her light badinage or her soul-entrancing music, could dream that beneath this gay and graceful exterior lay hot anger and gnawing jealousy and bitter regret? Euston Hastings moved about coldly calm, sometimes kindling up into a bright flash of mirth and wit, but oftener silent, and seemingly abstracted from present objects.

"He is debating the point with himself, and will go with me at last," said Mrs. Mabury, as she noticed his increased thoughtfulness of countenance and manner.

"She cannot love such an icicle," thought the gay and gallant Marchèse di S——, as he glanced from the beautiful American to her reputed lover; and he welcomed the suggestion, for he had resolved to become the competitor of Euston Hastings for the favor of Mrs. Mabury, "*pour ses beaux yeux et pour les beaux yeux de sa cassette,*" the last of which had been greatly extolled by fame.

The next morning Mrs. Mabury set out from Rome for Florence. She almost repented the test to which she had subjected the love of Euston Hastings, when she found that he was true to his resolution of not accompanying her. Her last hope expressed itself in the thought, "He will follow me immediately if he loves me; and if he does not," she added,

> "'Better to die by sudden shock,
> Than perish piecemeal on the rock.'"

"If I begin," thought Euston Hastings, "by yielding every thing to Estelle, there will be no end to her exactions. I will not suffer myself to be governed by such evident caprice as this of her visit to Florence. You will let me

hear from you soon and often, Estelle," he added aloud, as he placed her in the carriage.

"Oh yes! and pray let me know how your engagements come on here," she replied gayly.

"Evelyn could not have left me thus," was his last reflection as the carriage wheeled into another street, and he turned to retrace his steps into the house.

And to this cold parting, with bitterness in either heart, had a few short months brought the passionate attachment which no obligation, however sacred, could repress, but which was strengthened by no sentiment of duty. Thus must all which is wholly of the "earth, earthy" decay and die. Blessed be God! that there are some human ties into which His blessing has infused a Divine principle of life. These only can endure.

Days—a week passed, and still Euston Hastings lingered in Rome. He was beginning to feel, though scarcely yet prepared to admit even to himself, that he was not quite happy even in Italy, freed from all conventional restraints, and in the very position and circumstances which his own will had created. He was taking the first step towards that grand lesson which it is the business of life to teach us,—that there is in the universe a wiser and safer guide than our own wills. He had entered little into society since Mrs Mabury had left him, and those of his acquaintances who met him in his lonely walks or rides through Rome and its environs, accounted plausibly enough for his love of solitude by the dejection which it was supposed must be the consequence of the desertion of the beautiful mistress whom it was whispered the Marchèse di S—— had borne away from him. His highest enjoyment was now found in a solitary ride over the Campagna, where the sense of freedom he so loved was fostered by its heaven-wide horizon. From such a ride he returned one evening just as the last hues of day were

gleaming in the western sky, and was met by his servant—an American, filled with the most exaggerated ideas of the dishonesty of the "furriners" by whom, for the first time, he found himself surrounded—with the face of one who feels that he has important intelligence to communicate.

"Here's the key of your parlor, sir," he said.

This parlor was a room adjoining that in which Euston Hastings slept. It commanded a very beautiful view, and he had used it as a reception-room, and had his few books and writing-materials there; but as these were not articles likely to tempt the dishonest, he had never cared to place them under a lock, and he now remonstrated with his man for having done so, saying there was nothing there.

"There's more there, sir, than you think for," was the reply. "You see, sir, about half an hour ago, a woman and a man comed to the hotel and axed for you, and when they heard you wasn't in, the man said that lady would wait for you in your room; and then she sort of drew back, and he said somethin' to her about it's bein' the last chance that ever she'd have, and so then she went along with me. I tried to see who she was, but she kivered her face up, so I couldn't; and so I thought she hadn't come after no good, and so I just made bold to lock the door and take the key out."

"And where is the man?"

"That's what I can't tell, sir. I ran back to look for him, but he wasn't to be seed nowhere."

"I have no doubt the poor woman has come to beg—you were very wrong to lock her in there. Attend to my horse now. Rub him down well, and walk him some time before you give him drink—he has been hard ridden. When you have done with him, inquire at the post for letters."

Having thus disposed for some time of his prying do-

mestic, to his manifest dissatisfaction, as he had expected that his care for his master's goods would have been rewarded at least by witnessing the *denouement* of the mystery which lay beneath the lady's veil, Euston Hastings proceeded with steps somewhat quickened by curiosity to the room indicated. As he entered, he perceived in the dim twilight a female, whose form as well as face was muffled in a long and thick veil. She stood near a sofa, as if she had just arisen from it on hearing his approach; and even in that dusky light, the tremor which shook her frame, and her shrinking posture, marked her extreme agitation. The manner of Euston Hastings towards woman, was ever respectful; and as he now closed the door and advanced towards his mysterious visiter, his grave and distant politeness might have relieved her from all fear of personal insult, yet turning her head wildly around as if searching for some avenue of escape, she continued to retreat from him till she had reached the farthest limit of the room in that direction. Pitying her alarm, Euston Hastings paused in his approach, saying, "Permit me to ask, to whom I have the honor to address myself; or, if you do not wish to reveal your name, tell me at least in what I can be of use to you."

His question was not answered, and he repeated it in French and in Italian. The lady still continued silent, and as it now occurred to him that there had been some mistake, he said, "I am Mr. Hastings, for whom I have been told you inquired. I regret that my stupid attendant should have confined you to this room during my absence. Should you wish to leave it now, I assure you, you may do so without the slightest fear of constraint."

Without a word, a sound, though wringing her clasped hands as if in bitterest wo, the woman turned to go. The next moment made a startling revelation. We have said that she had retreated to the wall of the room, and had

stood pressed back against it. Some nail or point, projecting from this wall, had caught the riband of her bonnet, which had probably been untied for air before the entrance of Euston Hastings, and as she turned towards the door it was pulled from her head. She covered her face with her hands, but it was too late.

"Evelyn!" exclaimed Euston Hastings.

She stood before him in trembling silence, her face still covered with her clasped hands.

"Evelyn! Have you followed me even here with your reproaches?"

Suddenly her hands fell, and the glow from the western sky falling upon her, showed that notwithstanding the attenuation both of her face and person, her eyes were sparkling with more than their natural fire, her cheeks were flushed, and her lips of the brightest red.

"Speak not to me, thus," she exclaimed, "talk not of reproaches. I have none to make you."

"Why, then, are you here?"

"Because I am mad—because my heart thirsted to look upon you, even from a distance—to hear, perhaps, the sound of your voice, though addressed to another. Yet had another been with you, I would have turned away and died in silence: but I saw you, I heard you, I knew you were alone, and then the madness grew upon me to come to you, to entreat your pardon, and perhaps—blessed thought!—to die at your feet."

"Evelyn, this is worse than folly."

"I know it; it is madness—it is a fearful consciousness, is it not?"

Terrified by the wildness of her language and the glitter of her eye, he endeavored to soothe her.

"Nay, Evelyn—dear Evelyn," he said; "sit down—compose yourself, and let us talk together."

"Dear Evelyn!" she repeated in an accent of joy; "dear Evelyn! bless you for those words! I will think of them when far from you, and they shall cool my burning brain. You have forgiven me, and I will leave you. Do not fear to see me again. I will be near you,—for you will not deny me this,—to breathe the air you breathe, and sometimes to stand where your shadow falls: but I will not claim your notice; never again will I ask to see you till my dying hour. Then you will come to me—will you not? and take me once more to your heart, and let me die there. Promise me this, and I will be gone and trouble you no more."

Euston Hastings was deeply touched,—more deeply by her humble, pleading voice, than even by her words. Unable to speak, he stretched out his arms to her: he would instantly have withdrawn them, but already with a glad cry she had thrown herself upon his bosom, and it was not in human nature to put her thence.

It was long ere he was composed enough to speak or she to listen; but Euston Hastings was not one in whom an emotion could overpower for more than a moment the resolutions of a perverted reason. As soon as he had recovered his self-command, he placed her upon a sofa, and seating himself beside her, said, "Evelyn, you must return to America."

"Do not send me from you," she cried, clinging to him as if she feared even then to be torn away. "Grant me this one favor, to be near you: no—you will not—you cannot send me from you."

"But, Evelyn, do you understand that I can never consent to acknowledge you again as a wife, or to return with you to the country where I would be compelled to admit the validity of our marriage?"

"Do you call another wife, then?"

"No—at this moment there is no other so near my heart,

Evelyn, as you are; but this affection cannot overbear the convictions of my reason, or the emotions of an hour obliterate the experience of months. I will never yield again to any woman the power to torture with which the name and position of a wife endows her; therefore, Evelyn, and not because you are not dear, very dear to me"—and he drew her closely to his bosom even while he added, "I bid you leave me."

"Never—never," murmured Evelyn, as she threw her arms around him; "if I may not be your wife, I will be friend, sister—"

"That cannot be, Evelyn."

"The lowest menial in your house, then—the humblest dependent on your bounty—only let me be with you."

"Evelyn, hear me! Of menial or dependent it were vain to speak, but sister or friend you cannot be. There is but one alternative, my Evelyn—we must part; or—or—do you hear me, Evelyn?—you must fill a wife's place without a wife's name. Will you do this?"

Evelyn grew pale, and the eyes which had been fixed upon him as she lay upon his bosom, closed.

"Answer me, Evelyn—yet consider first—can you bear shame for me, the world's frown, and separation from all others? Can you bear this, and be loved as never wife was loved, or will you preserve the world's respect, Evelyn, and let us part—part now and forever?"

As he concluded, he loosed her from the embrace in which he had held her, and added, "Evelyn, you are free to choose—will you be mine or the world's?"

Evelyn clung closer to him as she found herself thus released, and murmured, "Yours—yours."

Still he left her free as he repeated, "As if no marriage vow had passed between us, Evelyn?"

"Yours—yours, as you will."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"It was new life—the earth, the sky
Seemed to grow fairer for thy sake:
But this is gone."

PASSION had achieved its victory. The pride of woman in Mrs. Mabury,—her pure and noble instincts, her delicate and generous affections in Evelyn,—had proved feeble barriers against its power. In neither had it found that which alone can resist its most insidious or most determined attacks: in neither was there a deep and true religious faith, working the conviction that there is a law superior to the world's law, —an affection holier than any earthly one, to which every sentiment must be brought into subjection,—a law which cannot, like the world's law, be evaded—which has respect not only, like that, to the outward act, but to "the thoughts and intents of the heart,"—an affection in whose strength we shall be enabled to resist counsels and persuasions from the voice most loved on earth.

To evade the inquisitive observation of his present attendant, and to rid himself of the embarrassing presence of Dixon, were the objects to which Euston Hastings first addressed himself. The first was accomplished by removing Evelyn from the hotel in which he lodged to another, during the temporary absence of the man, and in a different dress and without the mufflings in which he had seen her enter. The second object was not so easily attained; but after some days of inquiry, Euston Hastings heard of an English gentleman about to travel eastward, who wanted a good servant. He recommended Dixon, and without much difficulty

procured the situation for him. Evelyn then, by his direction, sent for Dixon, made him a handsome present as a reward for his fidelity to her, told him of the excellent place which Mr. Hastings had at her request procured for him, and requested that he would neither write nor speak to any one about her, as she did not wish that it should be known at present where she was. Once relieved from any apprehension of Dixon's observation and reports at home, Euston Hastings conveyed Evelyn to one of the most delightful villas in the neighborhood of Rome, where, assuming her maiden name, she was known as Mrs. Beresford. Here he surrounded her with every luxury that could gratify the sense, and lavished on her every mark of tenderness that the most exigeant heart could desire. So absorbed was he for some time in these engagements, that it was with a perceptible start and an actual pang he was recalled, by a letter in the handwriting of Mrs. Mabury, to a consideration of his relations with her.

Does such forgetfulness appear impossible? It can only do so to those who do not understand the true character of that feeling with which he had regarded her. She had never touched his heart, though no other woman had exercised such influence over his imagination, or played so skilfully with his passions. To such an influence, the only qualities requisite are those which awaken admiration; but to touch the heart,—to call into being that love which will endure through the changes and chances of time—that love which, purified from the dross of earth by death and the grave, shall be immortal as our spirits,—far other attributes are needed—attributes that command esteem. It is in spotless angel-robes that the spirit of the one we truly love first presented itself to our souls; and though spots and blemishes have afterwards perchance forced themselves on our attention, use and multiplied associations and the

sacred bond of duty had, before that, strengthened the sentiment with whose origin some illusion may have mingled. Let woman ever remember that the graces of person, the adornments of dress, the flimsy coquetries of manner, by which she sometimes seeks to win, can awaken no sentiment gratifying to a pure and noble mind.

The germ of a true affection for Evelyn had more than once been touched into life in the heart of Euston Hastings, by what were the real excellencies of her nature—its transparent ingenuousness—its delicate purity—its devotedness; but the emotion had ever been crushed almost at its birth by her *exigeance* acting upon his long-indulged selfishness. He now regarded her with a strangely-compounded sentiment, to which the truth and fidelity of her affection for him gave somewhat of esteem, checked and restrained by her ready abandonment of all other principles and duties, while her entire dependence upon him communicated to it a pitying tenderness, such as we feel for charming yet helpless infancy. She had certainly never before been an object of such absorbing interest to him; and though he felt himself in some degree bound to Mrs. Mabury, and compelled in *honor*—so do men sometimes misuse terms—not to break with her at present, he was watchful not to wound Evelyn by suffering any thing which could betray this *liaison* to appear before her, and he resolved that he would not leave her for some time, even for a visit to Florence. Having arrived at this decision, and written accordingly to Mrs. Mabury that he should be detained for some weeks longer at Rome, he abandoned himself to the enjoyment of his intercourse with her, spending most of his time at the villa, though retaining his rooms in Rome, and professedly living there. He was never checked in his devotion by fear of establishing presumptuous claims in Evelyn, for she was almost painfully humble and apprehensive of any thing that could seem

like a demand upon him. Every word of his parting letter had burned itself into her heart, and she was morbidly sensitive to the least taint of selfishness in her motives of action as regarded him.

And now, surely, it will be thought Evelyn was happy. Here was the very Paradise which her fancy had sketched, with scarce a hope of its attainment. The glorious sky, the balmy air, the fragrant flowers, the joyous birds, and all the more distant beauties of hill and vale and stream—these formed the *materiel* of a picture whose living spirit was love—the love for which she had longed and labored and sacrificed all else. And now what was wanting to her? All was wanting which constitutes true happiness—a heart at peace with itself—the smile of God. Of the last she did not yet think; for while external circumstances are agreeable to us, we seldom suspect that we are under the shadow of His frown, who often makes afflictions his chosen messengers of love. But she could not be unmindful of the strife in her own heart. All the beauty around her could not obliterate from her memory the home of her childhood, or the love which had guarded her there. She sometimes woke from her sleep with the word "Father" on her lips. She once took courage to ask Euston Hastings if she might write to her father. The question brought the only frown she had seen upon his brow, as he answered it by another.

"What would you tell him, Evelyn?"

"He must be very unhappy about me," she ventured to suggest.

"If you wish simply to inform him that you are well and happy, do so, and I will send the letter in such a way that he will not know whence it comes; but say nothing of me, Evelyn, for I will not deceive your father, and these ties of the heart which satisfy us, beloved, would hardly be enough for him. He would be for enforcing the recognition of our

marriage, and, this effected, I would flee from you, Evelyn, to the earth's remotest verge."

Evelyn turned pale with terror, and though soothed by his caresses, she was careful to write no more than he permitted to her father.

From this time a more remorseful sense of the unhallowed nature of the tie connecting her with Euston Hastings fell on her soul. She shrank from the observation of others, and hung her head with shame if one of her own servants looked fixedly upon her. In vain she said to herself, "I am his wife;" the very name she bore witnessed against her that she had released him—voluntarily released him from that bond. These thoughts vanished at the approach of Euston Hastings, who was ever greeted by glad smiles.

The silent, hidden struggle thus going on in the soul of Evelyn, was strengthening and disciplining it for future trial, while her reasoning powers were hourly acquiring force by the exercise of accusing or excusing herself. It is often thus, in these secret mines of thought, that the mind labors in the task of perfecting itself, and the world exclaims when some fair occasion reveals to them the accomplished work. Euston Hastings sometimes caught a glimpse of this new stage of advancement in Evelyn's mental being—a glimpse merely; for the next moment, fearful of the effect she might have produced on him, she was a child again—dependent, timid, or sportive.

One day, stealing unexpectedly upon her, he found her in tears: "What is this, Eva?" he cried.

Evelyn remembered his antipathy to tears, and answered quickly and deprecatingly, "Nothing in the present—only some sad memories which will come sometimes when you are away."

"Well, I am here now, and whatever it was, you must think on it no more, *mia carissima.*"

They were in the garden, where, under the shade of orange trees, and screened from view by a trellis, covered with the green leaves and purple clusters of the grape, Evelyn often sat with books or work. Seeing the gardener at a distance, Euston Hastings went towards him to give him some directions. The man was either stupid or obstinate, and some ten minutes passed ere Euston Hastings could make him acknowledge that he understood him. As he turned from him towards Evelyn, he saw that she was writing with a pencil on a slip of paper, which, at his nearer approach, she threw into her basket.

"What is that, Eva?" he cried. "Something treasonable, by the care with which you guard it from me."

"No—not treasonable," she said with a smile, placing her hand over the basket into which she had thrown it.

"That fair hand is only a temptation, Eva, not a defence," he exclaimed gayly, and seizing it, pressed it to his lips. While he held it thus, he possessed himself of the paper that lay beneath it, and read from it the following lines:

"Think on't no more! Say, canst thou chain
The lightning's arrowy flash?
Or with a silken curb restrain
The wave's tempestuous dash?

"Hast thou a magic wand, to lay
The struggling winds to sleep?
Or in its mid career to stay
The fierce tornado's sweep?

"These done, yet dream not thou canst bind
The electric flash of thought,
Or still with charméd words the mind,
By passion tempest-wrought."

"Really, Evelyn, that is not bad, if improvised upon my foolish words just now. My vine will become an oak one of these days, and stand without me."

"Never—never without you," and the thinker was again only the lover.

How long this life could have endured, if not interrupted by external circumstances, we know not; for a few weeks only had passed when a dark pall fell over its summer brightness. The garden walks were no longer trodden, and the house, with its closed shutters, was as dark and as still almost as the grave. Within one chamber of that house there was life indeed—but life made manifest only by agony. There, for ten days, had Euston Hastings lain burning with fever; now in wild delirium—now in unconscious stupor. He had been attended throughout the attack by an English physician, who was spending the summer at a neighboring villa.

Dr. Chambers was a man of middle age, who, possessing some fortune, and only a small family, had practised his profession rather from choice than necessity, till consumptive tendencies warned him rather to attend to his own health than to that of others. He had resided three years abroad, and though he dared not yet return to a colder clime, he was well enough in the mild climate of Italy for the enjoyment of life, and even for the occasional practice of his art among his countrymen who were congregated at Rome. Euston Hastings had made some acquaintance with him previous to his illness, and by one of those fortunate accidents in which the grateful and devout heart acknowledges a merciful Providence, he was met by him, returning from Rome, on the last day he had visited that city. Dr. Chambers was in an open carriage, Euston Hastings, as usual, on horseback. They stopped to say a few words in passing, and the physician, looking with a practised eye upon the languid expression and pallid face of Euston Hastings, said, "You are ill, sir."

"I fear I am, doctor. Will you examine my pulse and exercise your healing art in my favor."

"Why, you have fever now, sir," was the doctor's hurried exclamation, after resting his fingers a moment on the wrist extended to him. "My first prescription is, that you get off that horse and into this carriage. I will drive you home, and my boy can take your horse."

Euston Hastings was suffering much, and he gladly complied with this proposition; yet when they approached the house, he said, "Suffer me to enter without you, doctor; there is one in that house who would be greatly alarmed by seeing me return attended by a physician."

"A lady?—I did not know there was a Mrs. Hastings."

"There is not, sir," said Euston Hastings, with a flushed cheek and a very decided manner.

"Let me tell you there are few things more desirable to an ill man, than a good wife. There is no such nurse in the world."

The doctor drew up, and suffered Euston Hastings to precede him, as he had requested; but following sooner probably than he had been expected, he found his patient extended on a sofa, and one of the loveliest young creatures he had ever beheld, kneeling beside him, with a face almost as pallid as his own, tearful eyes, and quivering lips. She was pressing her hand upon his forehead; and as the doctor stood for a moment gazing at her through the open door, he saw her more than once press her lips to the dark curls which she had pushed back from his forehead.

Dr. Chalmers was a husband and father. He estimated such ties as they deserved, and had no toleration for the fashionable immoralities of the day. As he looked upon the scene we have described with no approving eye, an expressive "Humph!" broke from him. That its meaning was obvious to her who had excited it was manifest, for the color rushed to her temples, and rising from her knees, she withdrew to a distant part of the room, and concealed

herself within the draperied recess of a window. She did not again appear during this visit.

During the three or four first days of the illness of Euston Hastings, Dr. Chambers abated nothing of his cold and even haughty manner to the pale watcher at his side; but as the disease progressed, and he read the terror of her heart in her eager, questioning eyes, he could not resist the benevolent desire to impart some comfort to one so young and so wretched. Slight was the comfort he could give with truth.

"You must not be so despairing," he said to her.

"Oh! sir, will he recover?"

"I hope so."

"Then there is a doubt. It is not all my foolish apprehension. Even you feel there is a doubt."

"Mr. Hastings is undoubtedly very ill. I cannot say that he is not in danger; but his constitution is strong, and with the blessing of heaven—"

"Oh! sir, you are a good man, and your prayers will be heard: will you not ask that blessing for him?"

"Ask it yourself, my poor child."

"I dare not—I dare not! I have nothing in heaven or on earth but him: he is my all—my all!" and again and again she kissed the forehead of the unconscious sufferer, over whom her unheeded tears were falling thick and fast.

Poor Evelyn! She had, as she said, nothing else on earth or in heaven, but the love of that heart which seemed fast approaching its last, dying throb: for that she had given all else,—home, country, father—the approbation of her own heart—the smile of heaven; all had been as dust in the balance, weighed against that love: and now her idol lay before her in all the helplessness of mortality, and she dared not ask for him the mercy of that God whom both had forgotten, and one at least had contemned. The

past rose vividly before her. She remembered how she had heard, without an expression of dissent or even of regret, his avowal of disbelief in all things spiritual; how she had received in silence, if not in indifference, his acknowledgment that to him there was no sanctity in marriage; that the only law to him in that, as in all things, was his own will; and how she had herself consented to regard that sacred bond which God himself had established, as but a form, to be admitted or set aside at his pleasure. And now, how could she approach the Supreme Majesty of the universe in prayer for him whom she had thus elevated above Him? And yet, how dear to her now would have been the Christian's faith! She remembered how she had read in her long-forgotten Bible of the Divine Saviour; that he never cast from him the broken-hearted who came to Him to seek relief for their loved ones; that He had wept with them in their sorrows, had healed their sick, and restored their dead to life. What an inestimable balm would access to such a Saviour have been to her lonely and desolate heart; how she longed to bear her sick to His feet! But when she would have drawn near to Him, His voice seemed ever uttering—"Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity!"

For ten days, through the long day, and the dark, silent night, she had sat beside that couch. Others sometimes came to aid when it was necessary, but she was ever there. It was she who bathed his fevered brow, and moistened his parched lips, and marked, hour by hour, the shadow deepening on his face. On the morning of the eleventh day, Dr. Chambers came, accompanied by a lady of grave but benevolent aspect. It was Mrs. Chambers. She had heard from her husband what he knew or fancied of the sad story of the young and sorrowing stranger; and she had heard, too, his apprehension that this would be the

last day of the life on which her own seemed to hang; and she had said to herself: "She is a sinner, doubtless; but this is no time to remember her sin against her. She must not be left alone, to watch the dread agonies of the parting hour."

When Evelyn heard the physician's step, she glanced upward; but the next moment, seemingly unconscious of the presence of any other, her eyes riveted themselves on the senseless form beside her. The anguish, the despair in her face, brought ready tears into the eyes of Mrs. Chambers; and the good doctor, with a freedom he had never used before, laid his hand upon her head, as he said: "I have brought my wife to see you. She is good and kind, and will pray for your friend."

"Will you, madam—will you?"

"I will, my dear; and you will pray with me."

"Hush! hush! I dare not even speak His name, lest he should punish me for polluting it, by snatching him sooner from me."

"This is dreadful indeed," said Mrs. Chambers, "to regard God as an enemy."

"And is He not the enemy of sinners?"

"God so loved the world—the *sinful* world—that He gave His Son to die for it; and God commended His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us! The sin which is felt and repented of—the sin which we have determined to forsake, can no longer separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord; and surely you cannot look there without sore repentance, and an earnest determination never again to be one of the stumbling-blocks in the way of that immortal soul's approach to God and holiness."

A low cry burst from Evelyn's lips.

"Spare me! spare me!—and yet you but repeat what my own heart has said."

"And can you be regardless of its lessons?"

"Oh no! no!—let me only watch by him till—till—he needs no watching, and I will never see him more;" and with a wild burst of grief, Evelyn bent her head upon the pillow, and murmured, "It is for thy sake, beloved. Thy poor Evelyn hath nothing to hope—nothing to wish for where she has surrendered thee; but it may be that God will accept the sacrifice she offers, and give thee life and hope and joy."

"There has been a nobler sacrifice than any thou canst offer," said Mrs. Chambers, as she laid her hand soothingly on the young head, bowed down so low with shame and grief. "God has given His own Son to be a sacrifice for our sins, and shall He not with him freely give us all things? The Divine Saviour even now looks down on you with pity. Come with me to His feet, and ask Him to have mercy on you and on him you love."

Evelyn sank on her knees, burying her face in the bed-clothes. Mrs. Chambers knelt beside her, and in low, gentle tones and simple, earnest words, commended the young stranger and him, the seemingly dying man, to the pitying Saviour.

How blessed is prayer under such circumstances as those of Evelyn! When all earthly props have broken under us as reeds, or pierced us as daggers—how Divine a rest does the sinking soul find in the arms of Heavenly Mercy! The words of prayer ceased, and Mrs. Chambers rose from her knees, but Evelyn knelt still. Hours passed away, and still she retained her prostrate position, answering to every attempt to raise her, "I am better so." And through those hours, Mrs. Chambers sat beside her, and repeated from time to time some precious promise or soothing assurance of God's love. A more peaceful expression gradually stole over Evelyn's face, and something

of a child's love and trust began to arise in her heart. To this Divine Saviour—this merciful Father, from whom had proceeded such words of life, who was not her enemy, but her truest and tenderest friend, she strove in weak, uncertain, and trembling faith to commit her way, and to leave the yet dearer interests of him she loved.

"Our Father in Heaven loves *him*, too?" she said in awed tones to Mrs. Chambers.

"He is his Father, too. His tender mercies are over all His works."

"Then, Father, Thy will be done! We have chosen ill for ourselves—choose thou for us."

The shadows of evening began to close around the room, while Dr. and Mrs. Chambers were watching over two sleepers—for Evelyn, too, slept in a large chair beside the bed—the first sleep she had known for many days. Such had been the first blessed effect of her late inspired faith in the Divine mercy. When she awoke, Dr. Chambers was leaning over her. He whispered, "I can give you hope now—his sleep is natural—he will be conscious when he awakes, so command yourself; be perfectly quiet—any agitation in his present feeble state would be fatal."

Evelyn turned very pale. For an instant he thought she would faint, but she drank the water he held to her lips, and her color came again. She uttered no sound, but after one long look at the deathlike face beside her, tears began to steal down her cheeks, and bowing her head into her clasped hands, she endeavored to send her thoughts upward to Him from whom help had come to her in her extremest need.

CHAPTER XIX.

"No grief can touch thy sweet and spiritual smile—
No pain is keen enough that it has power
Over thy childlike love."

DANA.

THE recovery of Euston Hastings was rapid. While the languor and debility of disease hung around him, a new nature seemed to have been breathed into him. The pride of reason, its cold, stern dictates, no longer ruled his life; his heart was awake and active. Tears stood in his eyes as he gazed on Evelyn's pale cheek, and said tenderly, "You have almost paid for my life with your own, love."

Often did Evelyn turn from these demonstrations of tenderness to weep alone, and to seek strength in prayer for the performance of her vow. But old habits of action and speech, and probably of thought and feeling, came back with firmer health. Amongst the letters which had accumulated in Rome for him during his illness, were two from Mrs. Mabury. In the first of these, she said, "The Marchèse di S—— is my *cavalier servante*. He would change the title to that of husband, but I cannot consent to this, till I have found some one to supply his place in the former capacity. I would offer it to you if it were not for these Roman engagements."

The next letter was very short, and it was evident to Euston Hastings that it had been written under the influence of a bitterly-wounded spirit. It ran thus:

"Had I not been prepared, by the brevity and infrequency of your letters since I left you in Rome, for your ceasing to write at all, as you have now done, it could not have failed to cause me great anxiety. As it is, I am so far from desiring to constrain you to the continuance of a correspondence which has ceased to please, that I write only to say that I shall probably soon form ties which must at least greatly modify our future communications. The Marchèse di S—— has almost persuaded me that the character of a wife may be endurable in Italy, especially when decorated by the title of Marchèsa. However I may be known to the world, I shall still remain, if you permit it,

"Very truly your friend,

"E. Mabury."

Euston Hastings reflected long over this letter. It was not altogether unpleasing to him; and as he observed the date, and saw that nearly three weeks had passed since it was written, he flattered himself that his appearance in Florence now would be remarkably well-timed. If there was any thing more than a coquettish finesse in the hints thrown out respecting the Marchèse di S——, he would be too late to prevent that connection, which he now most earnestly desired; yet soon enough to convince Mrs. Mabury, from his still feeble appearance, that his illness alone had caused his seeming neglect, and thus to save himself from her reproaches, and her from a mortification peculiarly bitter to a character in which pride was so predominant a feature. But what should he do with Evelyn? He looked up, and saw her soft, mournful eyes—for such they had become—riveted upon him. They were instantly averted.

"Evelyn," he said, "I ought to go to Florence. I ought indeed to have gone before this time; but you have held me

chained here, and now I cannot leave you. Will you go with me?"

"Let us not talk of that to-day," said Evelyn, beseechingly.

"Why not to-day? Will to-morrow suit you better, capricious one?—I cannot postpone it longer."

"To-morrow, then—to-morrow be it," said Evelyn, and left him.

That evening, when Euston Hastings retired to his dressing-room, he found on his toilet the following letter:

"It is useless for me to strive to say to you, I must leave you—I have no voice for the words. But they are written—you have read them—you know that your Evelyn is yours no longer. But, beloved, she ceases to be yours only that she may be God's. I had forgotten Him, beloved—I had forgotten that the universe held any being greater, nobler than thou; and I strove and struggled, often unwisely, madly for thy love,—for that I held all else as worthless. I was no longer a daughter, a friend, a child of God. I was nothing but thine—body and soul thine. And thou hast been very tender to me, beloved—thou didst forgive thy poor Evelyn, and take her again to thy heart; but even while I lay there, Death came between us. I saw his shadow stealing over thee—thou wast going from me—and where? Oh, the agony of that fearful hour! I tremble now, as I remember how I would have sought the mercy of God for thee, and dared not draw nigh to him. Thou wast going from me,—nay, thou wast already gone from me, for my tears dropped unheeded upon thee, even as they now drop upon this senseless paper, and my cries moved thee not,—and I was alone in the universe. Ah! then, dearest, I knew that thou wast wrong—pardon thine Evelyn's boldness. I knew then that there was a spirit in man which dies not with the frail body.

I knew that there was a God—Creator, Father, Redeemer, Purifier—who reveals Himself to the simple, humble heart, but who covers Himself with an impenetrable veil from the proud, self-sufficient reason of His creatures. Wilt thou be angry with thy Evelyn for speaking such things to thee? I must speak them, even though thou shouldst be. I cannot go from thee without one feeble effort—which God in heaven bless—to win thee to that faith from which comes peace and hope. Into this effort I throw my whole soul and heart and life—and yet with how little hope! Thou wilt ask me for my reasons, and I have none to give thee; but oh! dearest friend, reject not my plea for this. Thou canst not tell the reason—canst thou?—why light and heat follow the sun; yet thou dost not doubt—thou knowest, thou feelest them: and so I know and feel the spiritual which lies within me, and around me, and above me. Oh that there were words which would answer to my heart's desire! I write so feebly, when my heart is so full of emotion stronger than life—strong as death and the grave. Death and the grave! how near I came to them with thee! for I felt that thou wouldst not encounter them alone—that hand in hand we would grapple with their terrors, and descend into their dread, unfathomable abyss. Already we stood upon its verge, when a friendly hand uplifted for me the curtain that veiled it, and light sprang up, and I saw that by death we entered into life—immortal life, in which all good beings saw and rejoiced in the love of God that had guided them thither; and I saw that over us, too, this love had brooded, seeking evermore to win us to that holiness which, with the All-wise, is one with happiness; and then, beloved, there came a sorrow upon me more bitter than all that I had yet known, as my own heart showed me that, without holiness myself, my feeble influence had all been given to chain thee down to earth—to lead thee away from God, towards the

dark and dreary gulf of hopeless death. Thou wert near it, oh! so near it—what would I not now have given for one hour of life and reason for thee, that, unfolding to thee the glorious revelations I had received, I might have won thee to one earnest, imploring cry to Him—the God-man—the Friend of the sinful and the miserable? And then it was that at His feet I vowed that if He would restore thee again to life, I would strive to redeem the past by speaking to thee the words of truth—by acting in the spirit of truth and purity. Were I careful only of my own spirit, beloved, I might say that our union is to me a holy one, for it is to me a spiritual union, a life union, a union which God hath blessed, and which only God's hand can dissolve; but it is not so to thee, and I may not, without sinning against thee and my own soul, give sanction or license to the wrong in thee. And now, beloved, what remains for me but to say that sad, sad word—farewell! Oh that I might have died beside thee!—but hush, my heart—have I not committed my way to Heavenly Love? Thy poor Evelyn is thine—thine ever—but thine in the holy bonds of marriage."

Euston Hastings read and re-read this letter, and even while its words and sentences stood visibly before him, and his hand grasped the paper on which they were written, he believed himself in a dream. It was impossible! Evelyn leave him! propose herself to leave him!—she, the child of emotion, of impulse, sacrifice the one absorbing affection of her soul to a principle, and that principle brought from the doubtful, shadowy realm of spirits!—it was impossible. He went to the door of the room which she had occupied since his illness, determined to speak with her, but all was still within, and supposing that she slept—poor Evelyn! little sleep had she that night—he returned to his own apartment. "After all," he said to himself, "simple and

humble and loving as Evelyn is, she is but a woman, and this is probably only a *ruse*. She knows she has become very essential to me, and she may think that I would rather acknowledge our marriage than part with her—this is doubtless the true solution of the affair. I will appear to take her at her word, and make all the arrangements for her going—she will retract of her own accord."

Satisfied with this view of the affair, Euston Hastings slept. The next morning he tapped at Evelyn's door, and called to her in his usual tone, to come out, as he passed down stairs. Evelyn soon joined him with a timid, doubtful air, which appealed almost irresistibly to his heart, but he steeled himself with the thought, "She is anxious for the effect of the trial which she is making upon me."

He drew her to his side, pressed his lips to her pale cheek, and said, "We will talk after breakfast, Eva. I have a convalescent's appetite, and you look as if you needed your chocolate this morning."

After breakfast, he said, "Come, walk with me, Eva," and leading her to the garden-seat of which we have spoken, he placed himself beside her, and exclaimed abruptly, "And so you would leave me, Eva?"

Evelyn trembled, but could neither raise her eyes nor utter a word.

"It is very painful to me to part from you, Eva." Tears were already falling fast on Evelyn's bosom as she sat with her head bowed in agony before him,—"But if it be indeed as you say, that you cannot stay with me without a painful consciousness of wrong, not only shall you be free to go, but I will do all in my power to make such arrangements as will ensure your travelling back to America in comfort. When do you desire to set out?"

Evelyn opened her lips to speak, but the words died in her throat. He could not maintain his indifference of man-

ner. He put his arm around her, and dropping her head upon his shoulder, she sobbed convulsively. Whatever pity he had for her, he had not changed his opinion of her motives, and as soon as her sobs were stilled, he said to her, "Would you like to go as early as next week?"

Evelyn felt that a week of such a life would be a longer torture than she could endure, and gasped, "To-morrow."

"To-morrow! I fear that will be impossible; but I will do my best, and I must, therefore, leave you now—I will be back before night."

He replaced her on the garden-seat, and there she remained for long hours in a conflict of spirit, known only to the great Searcher of hearts. He returned late in the evening. Evelyn was in her room. He went to her door—she came to it at his request, and learned that he had engaged as a travelling companion for her, a respectable elderly woman, highly recommended by persons whom he knew; and that to-morrow he hoped to secure the services of a trusty courier, with whom he had often travelled himself. "By the next day," he added, "all will be in readiness for you."

He looked languid.

"You are fatigued," said Evelyn, endeavoring to command her tears, "let me make you some of your favorite orangeade."

"Nay, Eva, I must accustom myself to do without these gentle attentions now."

His voice was low and sad, and Evelyn turned back into her room to weep and pray.

The next morning he went out before she appeared, and did not return till after she had retired to her room in the evening. He dreaded in truth to trust himself with her, lest his own resolution should give way, and he should accede to her terms. He knocked at her door in passing to

his room, and slipping under it a piece of paper, was gone before she could open it. The paper contained but two lines: "All is prepared, Evelyn. Your carriage and attendants will be in waiting at 10 A. M., to-morrow."

It was almost nine o'clock the next morning when Evelyn heard the step for which she had long been listening approach her door, pause before it for a moment, and then pass on without summoning her as usual. Trembling with agitation, Evelyn rose and followed. Euston Hastings received her kindly, but gravely; and without a word of the separation which was so near, they sat down to breakfast. Each seemed busy, yet neither ate. Euston Hastings broke out abruptly into talk about things which interested neither of them, and then became as suddenly silent. Evelyn spoke not a word. She was occupied in vainly seeking to conceal the tears which were constantly trickling down her cheeks. The carriage drove to the door. Evelyn's trunks were brought down stairs under the superintendence of her maid, who being from Paris, had gladly consented to accompany her to that city. She brought in Evelyn's bonnet and shawl, and laid them on a table. Evelyn retreated to an inner room, and threw herself upon her knees. When she arose, Euston Hastings was leaning against the doorway, pale and agitated. He stretched out his arms to her—"Evelyn, will you leave me?"

The voice was broken.

Evelyn threw herself into his arms in a passion of tears, sobbing out, "I may not sin, lest a worse thing come unto *thee*."

The pride of Euston Hastings rose to combat his love. Without a word he withdrew from her, and bringing her shawl and bonnet, assisted her to prepare for the carriage, and offered his arm to lead her to it. But, turning again to him, Evelyn raised her veil, and fixed her eyes long and

earnestly upon his face; then pressing his hand to her heart, she said with quivering lips, "Thou wilt know one day how thy Evelyn loves thee. Our Father in heaven bless thee, and reveal Himself unto thee! Farewell."

"Evelyn, why will you break both our hearts?" he exclaimed, as again he clasped her in his arms.

Evelyn did not speak—she could not; but as soon as he released her, she drew her veil closely around her, and advanced to the door. Her steps were feeble and tottering; and coming to her side, he supported her to the carriage, and assisted her to enter it. Ere he relinquished the hand he held, he placed within it a pocket-book containing ample means for defraying the expenses of her journey, and written directions for the best mode of pursuing it. Evelyn's trunks had been fastened on the carriage—the women who were to attend her were already within it—the courier was on the box with the coachman. At a sign from Euston Hastings, the latter flourished his whip, the horses started, and the hearts which had so lately throbbed together were sundered.

Evelyn had come and gone. It might have seemed a dream that she had been there, but for the enduring evidences of her presence which she had left. Euston Hastings strove in vain to escape from the haunting memory of that presence—delicate yet devoted, humble yet full of womanly self-respect. And strange to say, even while he was angry with her for leaving him, it was in those very parting scenes that he found her influence over him most powerful and most enduring. He combated that influence—he endeavored to destroy it by recalling to his mind the exacting, undisciplined Evelyn of his unhappy married life; but the later and happier impression had so nearly obliterated this, that though detached features danced before his vision, he could not collect them into a distinct portrait. He de

termined to leave the home with which she was associated, yet day after day found him still lingering there. Of Florence he no longer thought; indeed, every remembrance of Mrs. Mabury was now inexpressibly revolting to him, and it was with no inconsiderable effort that he wrote her a short and coldly-civil letter, mentioning his late illness as the cause of his delay in coming or writing. But Evelyn's letter was read again and again, and with feelings of far deeper interest now that he saw there was in it no *ruse*—no finesse, but the simple truth. At first he sought in this letter only the expression of Evelyn's feelings to him, but he soon went beyond this; he began to study its sentiments, to endeavor to estimate truly the principles which had separated them. There was much in these which commended itself to his reason. He could appreciate the beauty of an Intelligent Cause guiding in love His own creation, arranging all things with a view to its ultimate perfection, and establishing for this laws which were a transcript of His own perfect nature. Were there indeed proof of this, the sanction which he had vainly sought for the law of right would be found, and the self-interest which he had substituted in its place, and which had proved so uncertain a guide, would be dethroned. But here the reason, which had been perverted so long to the support of error, crowded a thousand infidel objections on his mind, and he ended in doubt and in dissatisfaction. Yet thought, travelling in a circle, still came back to Evelyn; and that which seemed false to him in reasoning, wore an air of truth as he recognised the strength of the conviction which had enabled her successfully to oppose what her whole life had proved to be the strongest feeling, the most imperious necessity of her nature. And how noble had she seemed in those parting scenes!—how free from all selfishness, from all jealous exactions, from all little attempts to work on his feelings, and thus force him into rash conces-

sions to be afterwards perchance vainly repented! Could the principle from which she had derived such power of self-control be a fantasy? If it were not, what a new aspect did it give even to the love which it had ruled,—spiritualizing it, and impressing on it the seal of eternity! And was there not something in the very pleasure with which his mind welcomed the image of such a love, that marked them to have been made for each other?

Thus attracted by the noble and beautiful principles which Evelyn had illustrated, and repelled by his own perverted reason, he might have moved around Truth in a circle, never approaching it more nearly, had not new influences been brought to bear upon his mind. Most of his time after Evelyn's departure was spent abroad—literally *abroad*—and great part of it in the saddle, the only object being so to tire himself down that he should sleep at night from very weariness, until the latter part of September, when violent storms kept him for several days confined to the house. On one of these days, he found himself unable to resist the desire which he had often felt, to enter the room last inhabited by Evelyn. It had not been entered since she left it, and there was something almost solemn to him in its deserted air. A piece of riband lay upon the floor—he had seen her wear it, and he raised it and carefully wiped the dust from it. A few books had been apparently forgotten on a table, and he approached to examine them. One was turned down, as if Evelyn had been reading in it on the morning of her departure. He took it up—it was a Bible, and the place at which it lay open was our Saviour's farewell to his disciples—that farewell so full of human tenderness and divine repose which we read in the fourteenth chapter of John. We read this, perhaps, with less appreciation of its touching beauty, because it has been heard so often when our hearts were not prepared to un-

derstand it. Even before it can convey any intelligent meaning to our minds, the sounds have become familiar to our ears as an oft-told tale,—but it was not so with Euston Hastings. An orphan in early childhood, his fortune had been carefully guarded for him, but none had taken pains to impress on his heart the words of truth—to train his spirit for Heaven. The Bible had been read in his hearing at church, but as he had spent most of his life in Papal countries, and had not been a very regular attendant on the services of the Christian Sabbath, when he did find himself in Protestant lands, this had not happened very frequently. And thus he had avowed his disbelief of the great Author of his being, without once examining the only record in which He has professed to reveal himself to his creatures. He had sought God in nature, and had found a thousand contradictions, to which, wanting the key furnished by revelation, his reason could afford no solution. Now, this book, hitherto deemed so little worthy his attention, had a new interest for him. It was connected with Evelyn. It was that in which he might hope to find the foundation of those principles which had governed her, and which, even while separating her from him, had made her more worthy of a pure and noble affection.

Hour after hour that day found him enthralled by that book—that strange book, whose histories stretched back beyond the dim ages of the past, into a period when time was not—whose system of jurisprudence stood perfect in its most minute detail, impressive in its grand and massive whole, when the dominion of law elsewhere was unknown—and whose poetry had ascended to the sublimest heights, and touched the tenderest chords of humanity, when the literature of the rest of the world was at best a collection of wild legends and incredible fables. But his deepest interest was excited by the precepts of the New Testament,

and the wonderful history of love for a fallen race which it developed. With this key, he could better understand, and more full appreciate the new principles of Evelyn, and the conduct to which they had led.

Euston Hastings went to his pillow that night a humbler man than he had ever yet been. He was not convinced. The disbelief of years was not to be overthrown in a day, nor the heart which had so obstinately rebelled against heavenly goodness, to be blessed immediately with the sweet submission of the child; but he began to doubt whether his whole life had not been one grand error—whether the simple, childlike Evelyn, had not seen more clearly into the great ends and objects of existence than he. The new light thus cast upon life, gave a new aspect to all its relations, and to none more than to marriage. If man did in truth possess a spiritual being, which was to be disciplined here for the experiences of a higher development and a more enduring existence, then did there seem an obvious propriety in his forming his attachments, not for the gratification of an hour, but for the nobler sympathies of such a hope. Marriage thus viewed, became spiritual and elevating. As he recalled the happiness of the last few weeks of his life with Evelyn, and contrasted it with the experiences of their earlier connection, he asked himself whether this difference was not the result of the purer sentiment which her later developments of character had excited—a sentiment which he now believed might well have withstood those chances and changes which he had formerly argued to be necessarily destructive to the continuance of happiness in married life. He was almost ready to admit that if these new views were correct, marriage might become, through its strong sympathies, its cordial and wide-spreading affections, and its claims for mutual forbearance, one mean by which the soul might be perfected for a higher

condition, and thus regarded, it lost that aspect of control over the free will which had always formed his most decided objection to it.

How far these intellectual conclusions were aided by his heart's desire to win back the lost Evelyn, we know not, but the result of them was, that he determined to follow as rapidly as possible on the route which he had prescribed for her.

CHAPTER XIX.

"In the hour of sorrow,
As in the darkness drear,
To Heaven intrust the morrow,
The angels then are near."

The one great effort made—the sacrifice laid upon the altar—and Evelyn sank beneath the conflict which she had so long and so nobly sustained. The beauty had departed from the earth, and her eyes turned languidly towards the distant heaven—so distant, and to be reached only by passing through such long and dreary years of life.

Such were her impressions, yet she faltered not in her course. While she shrank from the bitter cup, she still clasped the Divine hand which presented it. More than once during the early days of their travel, while return yet seemed practicable, her attendants, terrified at the rapidity with which her strength gave way, proposed her returning; but her cry was still, "On—on—faster—faster."

Ere she arrived at Paris, she had to be lifted to and from her carriage, and when she entered the Hotel de Londres, to which Euston Hastings had directed her in that city, all who saw her believed that she entered it to die. It was to her not an unpleasing thought. Once more she felt herself encircled by the Divine Love; and tears, not of regret, stole from beneath her closed eyelids, as too weak to speak or move, almost too weak to think, she lay, conscious of but one feeling—a tranquil satisfaction at the conviction that for her the conflict and the weariness of life would soon cease.

Yet there were moments when, as the fever-stricken longs for a draught from the bubbling spring at which he drank in health, she longed for the voices of her home—for the names syllabled only by love—"My child!—my Eva!" Sometimes, in a dream, she was once more within the accustomed halls, and caught the familiar sounds of home, or she stood at the river's brink, and heard the dashing of its waves against the rocky shore, and the whispering of the leaves amid the grove upon its banks, and she woke with some joyous song upon her lips, which she had not sung for years, to weep at the new sense of desolation which would then oppress her. And was there no memory of the later and more passionate emotions into which her life had poured itself—no intense desire that *he* might stand beside her in her death-hour? This, too, came on her at times with a rush which threatened to snap the frail thread of her life; but with all the little power left her, she struggled and prayed against such thoughts, for in them lay sin and madness and despair.

Ten days—a fortnight passed away. The courier, who had only been engaged to accompany Evelyn to Paris, was gone, but still the good woman, who had been her faithful travelling-companion, refusing to leave her, watched, with alternate emotions of hope and fear, beside her couch. But fear at length grew strongest. She began to ask herself what should she do if this young creature died thus far from home and friends, with none to whom she could apply for information respecting her, or directions for the disposal of her property. Evelyn, as she felt her illness increasing, had placed in the hands of this woman an order from Euston Hastings on his banker in Paris, bidding her present it if more money was needed than that with which she had already intrusted her. The money was not needed; but she determined to go to this gentleman, with the hope that

he might have some knowledge of Mrs. Beresford—this was the name by which Evelyn was known to her—or of her friends. He knew nothing of Mrs. Beresford; but a Mr. Beresford had within a few days presented a draft upon him, and had inquired if he could tell him where Mr. Hastings was at present. This Mr. Beresford was at the Hotel de France—he had sent a letter to him there to-day. Thither the good woman proceeded; and having been admitted to Mr. Beresford's presence, told her tale of sorrow and fear to him and Mary Raymond and Mr. Manelli. Mr. Beresford's energies seemed all restored as he listened. Much that he heard was inexplicable to him. What could have induced Evelyn voluntarily to part from the husband she had found, and who had, according to this woman's statement, suffered her to go with evident reluctance?—above all, why should she have resumed her family name? All this was mystery. But one thing was plain—she was ill and friendless—she, his tenderly-nurtured Evelyn. All the influence which Mary and Mr. Manelli could exert over him was necessary, in conjunction with the representations of the woman, who, having been Evelyn's nurse, best knew her condition, to induce him to control the impulse which would have sent him immediately to the bedside of his child. He consented, at their earnest solicitation, to consult the physician whose visits Evelyn had for the last few days permitted at the entreaty of her attendants. This gentleman declared that, in Mrs. Beresford's present condition, he could not be answerable for the effects of any agitation upon her. He proposed that at first she should only be informed of the arrival of her friend, Miss Raymond. When this had been cautiously communicated, Mary might see her and remain with her, and by her she might be gradually prepared for the interview with her father. Mr. Beresford removed immediately to the Hotel de Londres, and in an hour Mary

was with her friend, who, too weak to question, received quietly and scarcely with surprise, her explanation, that travelling in Europe with a friend, she had heard of her illness, and was there to nurse her, as she hoped, into perfect health. Of her father Mary ventured not to speak, and Evelyn asked not, but soothed by accustomed tones and gentle endearments, sank to sleep. For some days Mr. Beresford saw her only in her sleep; but one day, as he stood gazing on her with all a father's fondness in his face, she suddenly unclosed her eyes. She looked bewildered for a moment; then, as if awaking perfectly, a smile rested on her features, and holding out her arms, she said, "Father!"

She was too feeble even to feel strongly. It was he whose bosom heaved with irrepressible sobs as he kissed her pale lips, and laid his hand in blessing on the golden ringlets, which were all of his beautiful Evelyn that disease and sorrow had left untouched.

From this time Evelyn began to amend steadily, though slowly. In a fortnight she could bear to be removed from her bed to a couch in an adjoining apartment, where she spent the day. Her father was seldom absent from her side, yet no question was asked of the past—no explanation given of the present. She was still addressed by her attendants as Mrs. Beresford—a title which always brought the color into her pale cheek, and sent an indignant flush to Mr. Beresford's brow. The explanation which he feared to ask, his imagination had been busy in supplying. In his conjectures, Evelyn was blameless, and Euston Hastings at once licentious and cruel; his seeming affection and reluctance to part with her, only the hypocrisy which generally accompanies vice.

Evelyn had just withdrawn to her room one evening leaning on Mary's arm. Her father still stood where he had bidden her good-night, and the door between them

was not yet closed, when a servant opened an opposite door leading from the outer room to the landing-place, and said, "Is Mrs. Beresford here?—a gentleman wishes to see her."

As Mr. Beresford turned towards the man, he saw beyond him a form whose haughty, erect carriage, he recognised even in that dim light. His brain tightened, his blood boiled through his veins, as he became assured that he stood in the presence of him who had been well-nigh the destroyer of his child. His voice trembled with passion as he replied, "I know no such person as Mrs. Beresford."

Putting the waiter back, Euston Hastings advanced into the room, closed the door after him, and uncovering his head, said firmly, though not disrespectfully, "It is I, Mr. Beresford. I would speak to my wife—to Mrs. Hastings."

"You shall never see her again, so help me Heaven!" exclaimed Mr. Beresford, as he stepped between him and the door of Evelyn's room,—but ere the words had left his lips, a faint cry was heard, and rushing by him Evelyn cast herself into the extended arms of her husband. Mr. Beresford would have torn her thence, but while he clasped her to him with one arm, Euston Hastings guarded her from him with the other, saying, "Touch her not, Mr. Beresford, she is mine by every law divine and human."

"Dare you plead the sacredness of laws on which you have trampled?"

"I plead them against the interference of any other, but not against Evelyn's will,—she is free to throw off the bond which I have broken, if she will. Evelyn, answer for yourself."

He looked down to claim her award. A change passed over his face.

"Evelyn!" he cried in wild and startling tones—"Evelyn!—Is she dead?" he asked almost in a whisper, appealing by his looks first to Mr. Beresford, and then to Mary Raymond, who now approached.

"If she is," said Mr. Beresford, "you have killed her, and may the curse—"

"Hush! hush!" exclaimed Mary, "such words would indeed kill her could she hear them. Bring her in this room, Mr. Hastings, and lay her down—she has only fainted, and will soon recover, I hope."

It was not wonderful that Euston Hastings had supposed her dead, and as minutes, which under such circumstances seemed hours, passed away, and no color revisited the marble cheek, and the parted lips remained white as the glistening teeth which were just seen through them, every heart grew chill with the same fear. Passion could not live, or at least could not speak in such a presence; and as Mary glanced at Euston Hastings, who stood with folded arms, sternly knit brows, and face almost as pallid as that of Evelyn herself, gazing on the ruin he had wrought, she thought that even Mr. Beresford, if his heart could admit any feeling but terror, must pity him. Mary wished them both to remove from the room, but neither of them could be induced to do so, and when Evelyn at length unclosed her eyes, they stood on each side of her. Again her eyelids fell, but a smile rested on her lips. Once more she looked on them, and now she moved a hand towards each. It was eagerly seized, and tremblingly, feebly, she brought her hands near, and clasped in one embrace those she held. They could not resist her then, and holding them thus, she fell asleep.

CHAPTER XX.

"——— Flattering sin begins to dawn
From man's false lips and woman's eyes,
And hopes and hearts are racked and torn
In God's green earthly Paradise."

BARRY CORNWALL.

EVELYN lay for many days in a state of half consciousness, or as it seemed to her in a delightful dream, in which the dimly-seen forms of those she loved most dearly, were ever hovering around her couch, or bending tenderly above her. She awoke to a new life, a life no longer made up of many impulses, but pervaded by one grand principle, through which all its parts were brought into beautiful harmony. Euston Hastings had said truly of her past life, that all its seeming self-sacrifice was but a refined selfishness. Her vision had been heretofore bounded to earth; and the one absorbing, passionate desire of her heart, had been for love—human love. But her eyes had been opened to behold that spiritual world which everywhere surrounds us; she had seen the Divine love encircling the soul, and blessing it, even amid the utter desolation of its earthly hopes; and now trusting to that love, humbly submitting her earthly destiny to its award, her acts of devotedness were no longer the labors of a hireling, watchful to secure his reward, but were the free, spontaneous, graceful movements of gentle and generous and pure affections. Yet think not that thenceforward no cloud was to rest upon her life—dream not that to-day thou mayst yield to

the sway of passion, and that to-morrow, if thou throw off its yoke, the past shall be to thee as though it had never been. The evil thou hast done has borne, or will bear bitter fruit, of which thou must eat, it may be while thy life endures. Evelyn could not forget the abandonment to every wild impulse or selfish desire which had marked her past career, while she felt their effects in her own exhausted energies, saw them in her father's snowy head and bowed form, or trembled for them in the conduct of him to whom she had indissolubly linked her every earthly hope.

Evelyn's first apprehension of collision between her husband and her father was soon relieved. Mr. Beresford's nature was kindly and gentle, and if he could not feel very cordially to Euston Hastings, he was willing, when the first effervescence of passion had exhausted itself, to restrain every offensive demonstration for his child's sake. And Euston Hastings, as he saw Evelyn's eyes turn anxiously from one to the other, had whispered her, "Do not fear, Eva. You will not doubt my self-command, and I feel that I owe your father much forbearance, for I have caused him much suffering."

It was a bright, though cold day in December, when Evelyn, wrapped in furs, ventured forth for the first time after her long illness. It was the Sabbath. Not such a quiet, peaceful Sabbath as is known in England or in our own land. Trade plied its busy thrift—many shops were open, and the clang of labor sounded almost as loudly as on other days.

"Are you sure it is the Sabbath?" asked Evelyn, surprised by the appearance of all around her.

"By no means," replied Euston Hastings, with a smile. "You forget, Evelyn, that the Sabbath was a Jewish institution; this is Sunday."

"I know it, but I love that word, the Sabbath—it seems

to me to express all which is peaceful, still. It has, I acknowledge, however, no application here—is it always so?"

"Yes—this a country of entire toleration. Those of every faith or of no faith, may alike find a home here."

"Is the deep religious reverence which would hold this day hallowed, incompatible with toleration?" inquired Evelyn, timidly.

"Not exactly incompatible, perhaps—but the earnest feeling which the one presupposes, would scarce permit the existence of the other except in an angelic mind."

It was after several minutes of silent thought that Evelyn rejoined, "They do not seem to me necessarily opposed."

Euston Hastings turned to her in some surprise at the observation, but after gazing a moment at her grave and downcast face, he said, "Perhaps not; for you, Eva, are, I verily believe, capable of exercising both."

He felt, at least, as he heard her low response that day, and marked the tears that fell unbidden from her eyes while she knelt beside him, that her religious faith was earnest and reverent. Her worship that day, was a thank-offering to Him who "had led her by a way she knew not of," to the fruition of her fondest hopes. For had it not been for a vague terror which sometimes made her shrink from the future, because she doubted whether it were possible for happiness so perfect to endure, there would have been no shadow now on the brightness of Evelyn's life. On this day, especially, all was quiet in her heart—no voice of warning made discord with its melodies, for as her husband worshipped beside her, it seemed as if the blessing of Heaven had been breathed upon them both.

'Come, Eva," said Euston Hastings the next day, "you are well enough now to see some of the wonders of this famous city. Suppose we spend this morning at the Louvre."

This was a proposition too pleasing to be rejected; and with all the light-heartedness of former days, Evelyn prepared to accompany him. And what hours of delight awaited her in that splendid gallery, surrounded by the noblest monuments of art, and with so eloquent an interpreter of art at her side, who seemed to have forgotten all but her and the new world he was opening to her! She was standing before a superb landscape, on which her eyes and thoughts were riveted, while he was no less absorbed in observing the varied expression called up in her face by his own word-painting, when a voice near them caused them both to start. It was but a cold and careless sentence uttered by that voice, and uttered not to them, yet it sent a chill to Evelyn's heart. She glanced in the direction from which the sound came, and met the eyes of Mrs. Mabury. She was prepared for the encounter, for she had seen them from a distance; and having quelled the agitation the sight had first occasioned her, had purposely approached and spoken to attract their attention. She therefore stood unmoved, with something of triumph lighting her dark eye, while Evelyn grew pale, and trembled like an aspen-leaf, and the blood rushed in an impetuous torrent through the veins of Euston Hastings. Scarcely, however, could any emotion have been marked in him ere it was mastered, at least in its external signs. He bowed silently, but with a cordial smile to Mrs. Mabury, while leading Evelyn to another room, where he seated her and brought her a glass of water. As he saw the color returning to her cheek, he said, "I must leave you for a few moments, Evelyn. Do not look so frightened—I will return immediately." He was turning away; but a sudden emotion of scorn at himself for hesitating to avow his object, made him address her again, saying with some abruptness, "I must see Mrs. Mabury and ascertain where she is residing."

He was gone the next moment, and Evelyn sat as in a sort of nightmare, feeling that she must passively await the next turn of fate—that she must be still, though dreading that another might even now be unknitting all those gentle bonds by which she had hoped to bind him, not only to herself, but to a pure faith and a holy life. It was but a few minutes—it seemed to her an hour—ere he came again. He met Evelyn's glance of inquiry with a smile, and said, "You seem better now. Shall we resume our examination of the gallery? or have you seen enough for one day?"

"I think we will return home for the present," replied Evelyn. "I must not exhaust my pleasures too rapidly, lest they exhaust me."

She rose; and folding her cloak carefully around her, he drew her arm through his.

As they drove home, but few words were spoken by either, and when Evelyn glanced at her companion, she found his face grave and thoughtful, though not stern. For herself, she felt that a cloud had obscured her sun at its glorious noon. She trembled for the future, and yet she knew not why; for the fact of her having found Euston Hastings alone in Rome, and of his having never seen Mrs. Mabury since, seemed unequivocally to refute any suspicion she might have entertained before that time of an unavowed connection between them. It was a suspicion which Evelyn had never confessed; yet it could scarcely have failed to arise in her mind under all the circumstances, and it probably aided in no small degree to produce that feverish irritability of mind under which she yielded to the suggestions of Dixon, that his master's route might easily be traced abroad by one acquainted with his habits of travelling. Setting such a suspicion wholly aside, however, there was enough in the fact, that Evelyn had ever found Mrs. Mabury's presence fatal to her happiness since her

marriage, to render the event of the morning suggestive of painful anticipations. And did not coming sorrows already cast their shadows on her husband's brow? Yet how tenderly did he lift her from the carriage now! How anxiously did he watch her pale cheek and saddened eye, till the wine he made her swallow, or more probably his own gentle attentions, had recalled color to the one and life to the other!

Hours passed away, as hours often passed now with Evelyn, peacefully and pleasantly, enlivened by humorous anecdotes, interesting narrative, or lively description, from a mind of never-failing resources; but as the daylight waned, the spirits of Euston Hastings appeared to wane with it—he grew silent, abstracted, and restless. Evelyn observed, too, that he often consulted his watch.

"What o'clock is it?" she asked, not from any curiosity on the subject, but that she might break the silent musing which began to annoy her.

"Seven," he replied, "and in half an hour I must leave you for an hour or two."

Evelyn said nothing. The minutes passed slowly, silently,—another look at his watch, and then Euston Hastings rose, put on his cloak, and stood, with his hat in his hand, leaning against the mantel-piece opposite to her, as if loth to part without some communication which he yet found it difficult to make.

"You will not sit up for me, Evelyn," he said at length. "I may be detained to a later hour than I anticipate."

"No—oh no!" exclaimed Evelyn, quickly, as those words brought rushing on her the memory of the unhappy past.

"Shall I tell Miss Raymond and your father that you will be glad to see them here?"

"If you please."

Still he lingered. At length, as if with a sudden effort, he stooped and pressing his lips to her cheek, said, "Good-night! you will be asleep, I hope, when I return."

The hand he touched was cold, yet its fingers clasped his, the eyes which were lifted to his were heavy, yet they smiled on him. He advanced to the door, laid his hand on the lock, yet looked back once again; those eyes were still fastened on him. He returned—and bending over her, said in low, deep tones, "Evelyn, can you not trust me?"

"Can you trust yourself?" rose from Evelyn's heart to her lips, and for once, with a force that no timidity could restrain,—the words were spoken.

A quick, firm, full-toned "Entirely," answered them to her ear and to her heart.

The hand was already warmer which she placed in his, the eyes brighter which met his gaze as she said, "Then can I trust you too. Good-night—I shall now certainly sleep before you return."

A cabriolet was in waiting for Euston Hastings, but he felt the need of time to arrange his thoughts, and of fresh air and exercise to compose and invigorate them ere he ventured on the approaching interview, and he dismissed it, and walked forward slowly and musingly till the sound of a church clock striking eight made him hasten his steps. At a quarter after eight he was at the entrance of the hotel in which Mrs. Mabury now resided. Seldom had that bold heart beaten with a feeling so akin to fear, as at the soft "Entrez" that succeeded his application at her door. As he entered, Mrs. Mabury rose to meet him. Never had her beauty appeared more striking. Her dress was of claret-colored velvet, with a close *corsage* and tight sleeve, showing her splendid form to the utmost advantage. The dress rose high in the back, but was open at the throat and below

it, displaying the exquisite bust just veiled by a rich lace. Her black hair was disposed in heavy braids around her face and head. There was an unusual flush upon her cheeks, and a feverish brilliancy in her eyes.

"You have come at last," she said, holding out her hand to Euston Hastings.

He received it with a friendly pressure, but quickly relinquishing it, drew a chair for himself opposite the couch on which she had been seated.

"And now, Estelle, what have you done with the Marchèse di S——?" he asked.

"Nay," she exclaimed, with an affectation of gayety less successful than her affectations often were, "do not fancy that you can thus practise on me my own tactics, of carrying the war into the enemy's country. First tell me what you have done with yourself since we parted in Rome, and how you came to be accompanied as I saw you were this morning at the Louvre?"

Euston Hastings saw that the dreaded scene could not be avoided, and he resolved to face the danger boldly. It had ever been his motto that resolution is victory.

"To answer one of your questions, Estelle, is to answer both; for Evelyn has been with me almost ever since you left me in Rome."

"Perhaps you expected her there when you declined accompanying me to Florence," she said, with a glance of suspicion.

"A moment's reflection will show you that such a supposition is, to say the least, extremely improbable. I assure you, you could not have been more surprised by the appearance of Evelyn than I was."

"How did she find you?"

"She was attended by Dixon, who has travelled so much with me that he was as good a courier as she could have,

and who knew my habits so well that he could trace me without difficulty to any part of Europe."

"It was a bold undertaking for one who always seemed so timid."

"A sufficiently powerful motive will elevate the most timid above personal fear. My poor Eva, I verily believe, dreaded nothing in all her journey so much as that interview with me which was its object."

"Your poor Eva"—here a smile full of scorn curled Mrs. Mabury's lip—"seems to have played her part remarkably well."

"She has, for it required no art—it was all the perfect work of nature."

"And what was it when you left America, feeling that only in absence from her was there freedom for you?"

Mrs. Mabury's eyes flashed.

"Estelle," said Euston Hastings, "there is perchance much to condemn as well as much to regret in the past. Let us bury it and forget it."

"Bury and forget!" she repeated, in a voice of indescribable melancholy. "To forget would be, with me, the only bitterness in death, for memory comprises all for which I live."

"Say not so, Estelle," said Euston Hastings, touched by these expressions of sadness from one usually too proud to complain; "you are still young—the best part of life may be yet before you."

"The best part of my life had passed before I met you. It passed in my home—my mother's home, and at her side—Oh, for the quiet affections—the simple faith of those days!"

"And even those affections and this faith may be yours again, Estelle."

"Never—never—and do you know who divorced me

from them?" She paused for a moment, but Euston Hastings did not speak, and she resumed.

"It was you. When I met you in this very city seven years ago, I might have been vain and frivolous and thoughtless, but there still lingered in my heart the memories of a purer past—the hope of a brighter future. Your cold sneer withered them. You took away all charm from the past—you obliterated the future, and left me nothing but the present—and now, with the same cold heart and unshrinking hand, you cut from me my last hold on life!"

She had spoken rapidly, and now paused as if from having exhausted her breath, rather than her subject.

"I do not understand you, Estelle," said Euston Hastings.

"You do not understand me!" she repeated; "You do not know, perhaps, that the infidelity which you took such care to infuse into my mind, destroyed that faith which was the soul of the past, and from which I drew my only hope for the future: you do not know that now you are taking from me all I value in the present."

"You are becoming more and more incomprehensible, Estelle, and you will pardon me if I terminate an interview which seems to have been sought by you, only as offering an opportunity to reproach me."

He rose as he spoke. Mrs. Mabury also rose, and passing quickly between him and the door, she said, "You will not—you cannot—you shall not leave me thus."

Euston Hastings had come to Mrs. Mabury in a gentle and conciliating mood, with some consciousness of wrong towards her—some self-accusation; but the bitterness of her reproaches had steeled his heart, and now her tone of command, her—"You shall not leave me thus"—aroused his anger.

With a contemptuous smile, he said, "You have forgotten yourself and me," and stretched out his arm to put her from his path.

Fearful had been the struggle in her soul during this whole interview. She was combating alike for pride and love, and at that look and movement, the overwrought brain gave way.

There was a sudden flash, as of light reflected from some quick-darting, highly-polished substance, and as this gleam fell on his eyes, Euston Hastings felt the cold touch of metal on his side; it had been turned from his heart by striking on the watch which he wore in his vest. He started back, and ere he recovered himself, the dagger was turned against her who held it. He seized her arm, exclaiming, "Are you mad, Estelle?" and a struggle, short but fierce, ensued. As he wrested the dagger from her hand, she rushed to a window, and throwing up a sash, would have precipitated herself upon the pavement beneath. He drew her back, and then shriek after shriek, wild, fierce, almost unearthly, broke from her lips. Few men were strong enough to resist the grasp of Euston Hastings, yet it required all his power to restrain her. He had no need to ring for assistance, for these shrieks brought thither all who heard them. He was, as usual, decisive and imperious. Announcing the lady to be delirious, he sent her man for a physician, and keeping her maid to render him such assistance as circumstances might require, he dismissed all others from the room in a tone of command which admitted not of dispute. Mrs. Mabury continued to rave and struggle wildly at intervals, till the arrival of the physician, to whom Euston Hastings represented her attack as a sudden access of derangement, produced by mental excitement. After such an examination of his patient's condition as her struggles would permit, the physician decided, that the excitement alluded to had probably only determined to the brain a fever already existing. "The lady could not have been well before," he said.

"No, sir, that she has not been," said the *femme de cham-*

bre, who was present. "Before we left Florence, I could see that my lady was ill, though she would never acknowledge it. She grew so nervous that she could not sleep at night without laudanum, and from being the most good-humored lady in the world, she got quite testy and quarrelled with all her friends, till at last, even the Marchèse, whom everybody said she was going to marry, was driven off. This morning she was as well as usual before she went out, but ever since she came back, she has seemed quite wild."

"Whose dagger is this?" asked Euston Hastings, presenting that which he had thrust into his bosom on wresting it from Mrs. Mabury.

"Oh, that sir, belongs to a masquerade dress that my lady lent to her friend, Madame Baudin. She would not wear the dagger, and so it was just left on the table there," pointing to one near which Mrs. Mabury had stood at the moment of using it.

What a picture of a mind at war with itself and all around it, did this woman's simple statement present! And to this pitiable irritability, this wild senseless raving, had the contest between pride and passion reduced a mind of noble elements, but undisciplined by education, and unsupported by religious faith. The thoughts of Euston Hastings reverted to Evelyn. With equal sensitiveness, and far less vigorous powers, she had been subjected to certainly not less trying circumstances, and though her health had sunk beneath them, her spirit had remained untouched, or rather, had been purified and exalted by them. Again he asked himself, could the faith be an illusion which produced such influences?

Exhausted by a copious bleeding, Mrs. Mabury at length became quiet, yet Euston Hastings resolved, to the great satisfaction of her maid, not to leave her till the arrival

of an experienced nurse, whom her physician promised to send.

"I shall certainly sleep *now*," Evelyn had said, and sleep she did till awakened by the sudden flashing of a light upon her eyes. Opening them, she saw Mary Raymond standing at the foot of her bed.

"What is the matter?—where is Mr. Hastings," she exclaimed hurriedly.

"Nothing is the matter, Evelyn—there is nothing to excite alarm, and here is a note from Mr. Hastings which will tell you where he is. I would not have awoke you, but the man who brought it said it must be given to you immediately."

Before Mary had ceased to speak, Evelyn had torn open the note, and was reading,

"Be not alarmed, dear Evelyn; though I may not be able to return to-night, I am safe and well; for the rest trust me still.

"Yours,

"E. H."

There was evident haste and, Evelyn thought, agitation betrayed in this note—the characters wanted the firmness usual in the writing of Euston Hastings.

"Mary, who brought this?" she asked.

"A servant, who hastened away as soon as he had delivered it to me, saying that his mistress was ill, and he would be wanted."

"His mistress!" Evelyn repeated; "and did you not ask who his mistress was?"

"No—in truth, Evelyn, having just been aroused from sleep, I scarcely knew what he said at the time. But what does Mr. Hastings say?—nothing, I hope, to excite your uneasiness."

"His note only assures me that he is safe and well, though he will not probably return to-night—or, is it night?—what is the hour?"

"Not quite twelve."

"What a long night it will seem!" exclaimed Evelyn, with a heavy sigh.

"Shall I pass it in your room?" asked Mary.

"Oh no! Mr. Hastings may return—but I will thank you to light my lamp, for I shall not sleep again, I fear, till I have seen him."

It would have been a relief to Evelyn to speak to Mary of her conjectures,—to tell her at least that Mrs. Mabury was in Paris, that she had seen her that day, and that she believed Euston Hastings had left his home to visit her; but she felt that such communications might be displeasing to her husband, and she forbore. Still it was impossible to converse on any other subject, and she was therefore well pleased when she was left alone with her thoughts. Sleep she could not; for every distant step, every sound seemed the herald of some agitating intelligence. But the night passed without farther disturbance, and the first gray dawn was struggling with the dim light of the lamp in her room, when Euston Hastings returned. His face looked pale and worn, his countenance sad, as he approached the bed, and bending over Evelyn, said, "Awake?—You have slept little, I fear, my Eva."

"I had slept before your note came—but now tell me of yourself."

"Not now, Eva—I can tell you nothing now—I must sleep first, and then you shall know all. I only came now to assure you that I was well, and to ask that you would awake me at ten, should I sleep so long."

Before ten, however, Euston Hastings had arisen; and having been refreshed by a bath and a cup of coffee, en-

tered Evelyn's room, looking less exhausted, though scarcely less sad than in the morning. Evelyn rose to meet him. Drawing her affectionately to him, he seated himself upon a couch, and placed her at his side, his arm still encircling her waist: yet for some time he neither spoke to her nor looked at her. At length, turning suddenly to her, he said, "Evelyn, you know whom I went to meet last evening?"

"I think so," Evelyn replied. "It was Mrs. Mabury--was it not?"

"It was, Evelyn."

Another long pause followed, and then as abruptly as before he again addressed her.

"I have at last become convinced, Evelyn, that your sex are beyond the comprehension of any man. I thought I understood them—that I could touch every spring within the pretty, graceful automata; but I confess I estimated my powers too highly."

"May it not be that you have regarded us too much as automata?"

"Do not say *us*, my Eva—you belong not to the class. But what else has society made of women in general—conventionalism their law, and their conscience only a trembling apprehension of the '*que dira-t-on?*' And on this apprehension I have ever built in my intercourse with your sex, believing it supreme. You, my Eva, first taught me that it was possible for a conviction to exercise more power over a woman than a conventionalism. It was a strange thought to me—so strange that I could not at first believe it. Your timid nature was precisely the one to feel most keenly the value of conventional opinion; yet you trampled it beneath your feet to reach my heart, and then, at the very moment that I believed you all my own, the weak girl became endowed with unconquerable strength—strength to endure; and though I could see that her heart had grown to mine,

and bled with every effort to separate them, she resolutely tore them apart, and turned from me—"

"To die," breathed Evelyn, in a low tone.

"Ay, to die. I felt then that there was indeed something in humanity beyond the gross senses that move the common herd. What is this something? Whence comes it? Whither goes it when the body is resolved into its original particles?"

He was silent, sunk in revery, his thoughts evidently far away. Evelyn grew impatient—she saw no connection between all this and the events of the past night, and she said at length, "But Mrs. Mabury—"

"Ay, true—I had forgotten—she too has disappointed all my calculations. I had studied her character for years, and thought myself acquainted with its every phase. I long ago decided that pride was its master-key, holding in check every other passion and principle. This I could not hope to conquer, but I might mould it to my purpose. In short, it was the prominence of this characteristic which made me feel it safe to maintain with Estelle a friendship that might have had unpleasant results with one less proud or more impulsive than I supposed her to be. In all the years of our intimate intercourse, never had I known her to lose her self-command, and never, therefore, had she lost her influence over me; but last spring, when I joined her at Havre—"

"Joined her at Havre!" exclaimed Evelyn.

"Yes—she awaited me there," quietly resumed Euston Hastings, unconscious of the pang he was inflicting in thus corroborating suspicions, from which Evelyn had endured the keenest suffering, but which she had discarded as unjust on finding him alone in Rome.

"She was not with you in Rome," said Evelyn, doubtfully

"Not when you arrived—she had gone to Florence."

"Had she been with you, we should have been parted forever," and Evelyn's pulses throbbed, and her color rose as if she were even then enduring the indignation and the agony of such a discovery.

"Silly child!" exclaimed Euston Hastings with a smile—"do you think after following me to Rome, you could have gone back without seeing me?"

"I do not know how that might have been. I think I could; but had I seen you, it would have been not to plead for forgiveness, as one conscious of having sinned against you, but to upbraid you with my own wrongs."

"We should indeed, then, have been parted forever, and your upbraidings would have been as unjust as unwise."

"They would indeed have been unwise," said Evelyn, as she suffered herself, her momentary ebullition of anger conquered, to sink back again on the arm from which she had withdrawn.

"Ay, and unjust too, Evelyn, for I had not been drawn from you by the attractions of Estelle; and whatever influence they had exerted over me was already in its wane." Evelyn pressed closer to the side against which she leaned, and Euston Hastings smiled as he continued—"Yes, Evelyn—already in its wane, for the pride on which I had calculated to preserve me from exactions on the part of Estelle, had become morbidly sensitive, from the fear, I suppose, that I would consider her permission to join her abroad, as a proof of an interest more tender than that which I had professed to entertain for her. At least it was only to a determination to uproot such an impression from my heart, that I could attribute the frequent coldness, petulance, and unreasonableness, which, even before she left me for Florence, had convinced me that marriage was not the only connection in which a woman might prove a

tormentor. She went about a fortnight before you entered Rome, and till yesterday, I had not seen her again, nor had I even heard of her for several months. The moment I saw her, I felt that a crisis had come. Perfect confidence had hitherto marked my intercourse with Estelle. I must withdraw this, and well I knew it would be impossible to prevent her feeling the withdrawal, or I must unveil to her the new impulses you had given to my mind—the new feelings you had awakened in my heart—feelings incompatible with an intercourse such as I had hitherto maintained with Estelle."

"And is it so?" asked Evelyn, softly.

"Can you doubt it, Evelyn? Have you not seen it, felt it? my wife, at last in your own sense of that word. It is no longer your beauty, Evelyn, beautiful as you are, that I chiefly prize, it is your purity, your gentleness, your devotedness of feeling, your firmness of principle. It was the manifestation you had made of these qualities, which brought me here, my Eva, to offer you a second time my love—a love deeper, truer, worthier of you; and it is to these qualities that I would desire to ally myself through my whole existence, though that should be forever. Is this what you meant by a spiritual union, my beloved?"

Evelyn could not speak, but she lifted to his, eyes so full of gratitude, a face so irradiated with joy, that Euston Hastings, as he pressed his lips upon the serene brow, said to himself, "It is the face of an angel." As the thought passed through his mind, he remembered another face on which hate and despair had impressed themselves as vividly. The remembrance caused an irrepressible shudder, as he said, "But I must finish my tale. I have told you that I had not heard from Estelle for months before yesterday. I even supposed that she had married again, that she was now the Marchèsa di S——; but in the few minutes I left

you at the Louvre, yesterday, I learned that this was not so. At the same time, she urged me almost passionately to say that I would visit her in the evening, and I promised before we parted, to be at her hotel in the Rue de ——, at eight o'clock. I went reluctantly, for I foresaw what I always endeavor to avoid with your sex—a scene; but how little did I anticipate what awaited me—how little could I anticipate it!—how little dream, that the pride of Estelle would permit her to draw even on her memory, the unenviable *eclât* of murder and suicide!"

"Murder! suicide!" burst in accents of horror from Evelyn's ashy lips.

Euston Hastings had, at last, been too abrupt in communicating that which he had approached with such reluctance—she was fainting. He laid her on the couch—held a glass of water to her lips, and spoke soothingly to her; she revived, and gazing earnestly in his face, burst into tears. We will not linger on this scene. It was long ere Evelyn was sufficiently composed to ask for the details of the fearful interview. Euston Hastings gave them faithfully—not one reproach was withheld.

"And now, Evelyn," he said in conclusion, "I have told you all. Many—most men, perhaps, would have thought it impolitic to do so,—but I could not be happy even in your affection, if there were one corner of my heart—one event of my life which I *feared* to unveil to you. I am called reserved, and so I am, but it is not from fear. From you, I would henceforward have no reserves, my Eva; and therefore, I acknowledge to you, that the reproaches of Estelle were not altogether unjust. I did much, doubtless, to unsettle her confidence in the faith of her childhood. Nor was this all—"

"Say no more," said Evelyn, checking his self-accusation, "we will both endeavor to make amends to her in the future."

"You owe her nothing, Eva."

"Are we not one now?—Is not your debt mine? Let me begin even now to pay it. Let me go with you to her hotel, and become her nurse, instead of leaving her to be tended by strangers."

"And would you, Eva, do this? Could you do it for one whom you cannot regard as a friend?"

"The faith I profess," said Evelyn timidly, "teaches me to love and to do good to not my friends only."

"It is a beautiful faith, and beautiful indeed must be a life conformed to it. Act out your own sweet will, then, my Eva. I will not restrain it. You shall go with me, and you must even now prepare for it, for I promised to meet Estelle's physician at noon."

CHAPTER XXI.

"None ever struck another, save through his own side."
R. C. FRENCH.

"NOBLE thoughts write themselves clearly on her face," thought Euston Hastings, as Evelyn joined him, prepared for her visit to Mrs. Mabury. There was little conversation on their way thither, for the hearts of both were too full for speech. To Evelyn, what she was about to do, was an offering of gratitude to Heaven, as well as of devoted love to her husband—it was a religious service.

Mrs. Mabury's physician was already in attendance. His countenance was unpromising.

"She is no better," he said in reply to Evelyn's anxious inquiries, and then, turning to Euston Hastings, named another medical gentleman with whom he would like to consult. Him, Euston Hastings immediately summoned.

In the room in which they sat, could be occasionally heard the wild ravings of delirium. Euston Hastings shrank from the thought of permitting Evelyn to encounter them. "There may be danger," he said.

"No"—the physician interposed—"there can be no danger, as I have been compelled to confine the lady's arms to prevent her injuring herself."

Thus encouraged, Evelyn entreated so earnestly to be permitted to enter the chambér of suffering, that Euston Hastings at length consented. He and the physician accompanied her thither, but they remained standing behind

the curtains that were drawn around one side of the bed, while Evelyn proceeded alone to the other side, where sat the usual attendant of Mrs. Mabury—her eyes red with weeping; and another woman, dressed in the peculiar garb of a Sister of Charity. Evelyn scarcely saw these, however, for her whole attention was given to the sufferer in the bed, who, restrained as she was, still threw herself restlessly from side to side, while her burning eyes glared with an almost fierce intensity from her crimson face. She could excite nothing but pity now.

"Speak to her," said the physician, as Evelyn stood gazing on her in silent sorrow.

"Mrs. Mabury," uttered in a low, tremulous tone, was all that Evelyn could say. Low as it was, the voice seemed to touch some still unbroken chord of memory—the large, stern eyes grew softer in expression as they turned towards it.

"I am very sorry to see you suffer," were the only words that Evelyn could command in answer to that mute appeal.

Mrs. Mabury still remaining quiet, Evelyn ventured to lay her hand upon her forehead, and while looking earnestly into those upturned eyes, she prayed with an earnest spirit that God would restore her to reason and to life. As she stood thus, an expression of satisfaction stole gradually over the rigid features of the sufferer, and the muttering, which had hitherto been suspended only for wilder bursts of phrensy, ceased.

"My cold hand is grateful to her," said Evelyn to the Sister; "if you will place some cold water within my reach, I will wet my fingers and lay them on her forehead."

"There is no need of that," answered Sister Agatha; "you have the power to soothe her—see—she will sleep

soon,"—and in truth the lids soon after fell, for the first time during that night and day, over those softening eyes.

Was this Mesmerism—or was Evelyn right when she whispered in her inmost heart, "God has heard my prayer; she will live—and the dark shadow of another's misery and death, caused by him, will pass from my husband's life."

From this time Evelyn was considered by the physicians as their best coadjutrix, and under her influence their patient became gentle even in her madness. Her memory seemed to go back to that early time when all around her and within her was fresh and pure. Her conversations were with her mother, and a young sister who had died in early life, and by whose name of Gertrude she always addressed Evelyn. Sometimes she would sing, with touching pathos and the most exquisite melody, snatches of some old song, probably remembered in association with that early home.

Euston Hastings had been requested by the physicians not to show himself to Mrs. Mabury, lest he should awaken the train of thought which had proved so perilous—a request with which he gladly complied; yet he seldom left her hotel during the day, and at night he slept on a couch in her saloon, where he might be at hand to summon her physicians, or to perform any other necessary service. He always insisted, however, that Evelyn should return home at night.

Four days had passed away, with little change in the invalid beyond that which had taken place on Evelyn's first introduction to her room. On the morning of the fifth she found Mrs. Mabury sleeping at her entrance, and taking her seat beside the bed she watched long her tranquil slumber. Evelyn had now a strong hope that Mrs. Mabury would recover; and as she now gazed upon her pale but placid features, she asked herself what would be the

character of their future intercourse. Would that death-like face rise up again brilliant in beauty, and with its glittering eyes and haughty brow, lure away the heart on which rested her every hope of earthly peace? Would that voice, which had become so touching in its tones of tender sadness, again mock her anguish with its scornful laugh?

These thoughts were yet passing through her mind when Mrs. Mabury unclosed her eyes, and fixed them on her with a look which showed at once that reason had returned to her throne. There was surprise and inquiry in its expression. Impulsively Evelyn drew back behind the draperies of the bed, as if she dreaded to meet that glance; and Sister Agatha, seeing the movement, advanced. Mrs. Mabury looked fixedly at her for a moment and said, in a feeble tone, "Have I been ill?"

"Yes," replied the Sister, "and you are still not well enough to ask questions. Take this draught, and then sleep. When you wake again, I will tell you all you wish to know."

Too feeble to contend, Mrs. Mabury obeyed, and was soon again asleep, and Evelyn stole from the room, anxious to communicate this favorable change to Euston Hastings. The physicians were with him, and forbade her return to the sick-room. Mrs. Mabury must at present, they said, be left to the care of Sister Agatha, with whom she would not be tempted to converse on any agitating subject—the very sight of an acquaintance at present might be injurious to her, by arousing memory and stimulating unquiet thoughts.

The next morning when Evelyn presented herself at the Hotel de ——, she was told by Mrs. Mabury's woman that Sister Agatha had requested to see her in the saloon on her arrival. She accordingly waited there while the girl informed the Sister of her presence.

"The lady is much better," said Sister Agatha on her entrance,—"so much better that it is by her own request I now come to you to thank you for your past kindness, and to ask that you will excuse her from seeing you till she is stronger."

Evelyn was grieved, and Euston Hastings saw it in her countenance.

"It is far better so, Eva," he said, drawing near her; "perfect quiet is now necessary for Mrs. Mabury's recovery. Present Mr. and Mrs. Hastings' regards to Mrs. Mabury," he continued to the Sister, "and say they are rejoiced to hear she is better, and hope she will be well enough to see them soon."

"This is well," he said to Evelyn, when they entered the carriage on their return home. "Estelle has resumed her self-command, and our future intercourse will arrange itself naturally and properly."

Evelyn was not so well satisfied. She longed to know how much Mrs. Mabury's memory had retained of the past. She could not but fear that there were bitter conflicts still in store for that proud and passionate spirit which she would have gladly led, had she been permitted, to the great Comforter. As it was, she could only commend her to Him in her prayers, which she failed not to do.

Days passed away. Euston Hastings inquired every day after Mrs. Mabury's health, and received ever the same answer,—she was better, but still too feeble to receive visiters. One day he called at an unusually late hour, and while he was still speaking to the porter, a Romish priest, in the dress of one of the religious orders, passed him, and entered the door from which he had just been turned away.

"Who is that?" he asked of the porter.

"A holy father who visits the sick lady every day," was the reply.

"Visits sister Agatha, perhaps," thought Euston Hastings; yet plausible as was the supposition, it did not satisfy him. The subject recurred to his mind again and again through that day. "Estelle is not in a condition to be left so much to herself," he said to himself; "to-morrow I will insist on seeing her."

Euston Hastings was right. Mrs. Mabury, enfeebled by disease and maddened by humiliation, was indeed unfit to withstand the influence of a religionist as zealous and as astute as Sister Agatha.

The ravings of delirium could not but betray to Mrs. Mabury's constant nurse much of her past history and present feelings; and before the return of reason permitted her to converse, the hope of bearing back to the bosom of the Church this her straying and sorrowing child, had redoubled attentions prompted at first by charity alone. With consummate tact did she approach her end. Mrs. Mabury's skepticism offered little opposition to her, for it was far more of the heart than the head. It was identified with the influence of Euston Hastings, and though vigorous in his presence, grew doubting and fearful when he was not supporting it. Now she was not only separated from him, but she resolved the separation should be as lasting as their lives; for how could she forgive that look, that gesture of scorn which had so stamped themselves upon her brain, that even madness had not erased them. And not only was she separated from him, but there were moments when she believed herself standing within the circle of the shadow of death—standing there without hope or faith, without friend or counsellor—alone—alone. Standing thus face to face with the grim tyrant, whom in a moment of passion she would have rushed to meet, she shrank back appalled from his dread features. She no longer dared to die, while yet she loathed to live. When Euston Hastings had wedded

another, she had cried, "Oh that I could die!" Yet then her pride had sustained her; and though the arrow had penetrated her heart, she had covered the wound, and moved through the world with so firm a step and so lofty an air, that none had dared to pity her. Now, in that hour of madness, she had stripped the veil from her heart, and she, before whom as before a crowned empress men had bowed, was henceforth to be the object of their mockery, or, at best, of their pity. Even now the few who approached her looked on her as none had ever looked before—she hated the light that revealed to her such glances; while even in midnight darkness there stood beside her one from whose eyes flashed angry scorn, or on whose lips there sat a mocking smile, to escape from which she would have braved all but death.

And what was the convent, of which Sister Agatha spoke, but a grave without the peril or the pang of death? Would it not shut her as surely from scornful eyes and mocking lips —and would it not wring that marble heart, as certainly as death itself, with late repentance and vain remorse? She luxuriated in the thought that she should thus at last bow that haughty spirit, and call forth from that cold and fickle nature passionate longings and vain regrets for the friendship which had embellished so large a portion of his life. She was impatient for the moment when these objects might be accomplished. Before she left her room she had communicated with the Superior of the convent of ——, and in the afternoon of that day on which Euston Hastings saw a priest issuing from the hotel she inhabited, she was within that convent's walls. The next morning, impelled by his reflections of the previous day, he called on her at an early hour, and found a letter awaiting him. With a foreboding heart he drew close the blinds of the carriage in which he sat, ere he broke the seal and read the following lines:

"You know me too well, I think, to doubt that our last interview was a final one. There is but one way to expiate the folly which has exposed me to your scorn—it is to die—and to you I am henceforth dead. Ere you read this, the gates of a convent, impenetrable as the grave, will have closed upon me. As from the grave, then, I speak to you, and bid you review the past, and answer to your own heart the question, whether I have been more sinned against or sinning. Remember our early days of intimacy,—recall the earnestness, the perseverance with which you sought to expel from my mind the simple faith of my childhood, which had been stifled but not extinguished by the follies and vanities of a gay and thoughtless life. Remember, too, the avidity with which you sought the heart so little prized when once you were assured of it.

"Early in our intercourse I saw into your cold and self-absorbed and mocking nature, and though even then you had won a power over me which none else could ever boast, I vowed that you should live my slave and not my master; and for years I accomplished my vow—at what cost none but a woman can conceive. Never, during all those years, did I yield, where you were concerned, to one spontaneous impulse. I kept you ever just within reach of the prize which you could never grasp—I repressed the wild throbbings of my heart—I cultivated my intellect—I studied every charm of manner, and all that I might keep you more surely in my bonds. But there was yet a harder task in store for me. Wearied of what seemed to you a fruitless pursuit, you had been attracted by another. Oh, the bitterness of that hour, which brought me first suspicion and then confirmation of the fact! Yet it did not utterly crush me, for it wanted the only unendurable pang—I had commanded myself and you dared not scorn me. I feared, however, that my strength might give way, and I left you.

A few months passed—a few months only, for they were all that I believed requisite to wear away the first glow of your new attachment—and I returned. Hitherto my pride and my love had been opposed, and had combated each other, but thenceforth they acted in unison, and to win you from her who had for a time estranged us was the prompting of both. I obeyed that prompting—you left her—you stood beside me with the world against us, and you said—'For life, Estelle!'

"I have been obliged to lay aside my pen, overpowered by the memory of that moment. Cold as you were—self-absorbed as you were—I still believed you had a heart; and you, on the contrary, supposed that I had none. The supposition showed you ignorant indeed of woman. Only to your sex belongs the high prerogative of being able to divest themselves wholly of this part of the human organism. You have taught me that a subtle intellect and acute senses are all that are needed in man, but it is not thus with woman. Society may render her frivolous—man may teach her to dissemble—vice may degrade her—but nothing can make her heartless. It was a heart—a naked, bleeding heart which threw itself upon you in our last interview, and found you iron. Can you wonder at the madness that ensued? Even for that last folly you cannot scorn me, while the past which I have recounted lives in your memory. And if you do, what need I care? Little reck the dead in their silent graves of the feelings with which the living may regard them, and to my lonely cell no proud glance, no mocking tone can reach. Would you see how steadily I can walk to that cell—my only refuge from a world which you have desolated—come three days hence to the chapel of the convent of ———. Come, and look once more upon one whose stream of life might have moved on joyously and proudly to the last but for you—one whose

powers of mind and heart have been perverted from all true and noble aims, to make sport for you during a few brief years of your existence! See her consign herself to what will be to her a living death, and then live on happily if you can!

"ESTELLE."

Little would Euston Hastings have heeded these reproaches, had they not been echoed by a voice within him. As it was, they pierced through the shield of selfishness to his heart, but they also irritated his temper. He would at that moment have given his whole fortune to blot from Mrs. Mabury's mind the past which she had sketched so forcibly, and to restore her to the life which he had darkened; yet, at that very moment, his heart closed against her as it had never done before. Involuntarily in contrast with the proud and passionate and vindictive feelings she had avowed, arose in his mind the memory of Evelyn's pure and generous affection, under deeper wrongs than Mrs. Mabury had ever endured. She, too, had withdrawn from him, but it had been with blessings and prayers—it had been not to save herself from suffering, but him from sin. Her heart, too, had been crushed, but from it had proceeded no poisonous exhalation—it had sent forth only the sweet odor of love to him, and faith in Heaven. The result of his reflections expressed itself in two equally decided resolutions—the one, that every engine he could influence should be set in motion to prevent Mrs. Mabury's insane sacrifice, as he termed her seclusion in a convent; the second, that her restoration to the world once accomplished, he would never see her more.

From his knowledge of Mrs. Mabury, Euston Hastings was convinced that if she were induced to leave the convent at all, it must be before any public act—such as her as-

sumption of the white veil of the novice—should make her intended profession known to the world. "Let her once make this public avowal of her designs, and she will die there," said Euston Hastings to himself,—"her pride will never permit her to retract."

Whatever was to be done, therefore, must be done quickly, and he lost not a moment's time in his efforts to reach and to influence Mrs. Mabury. Having vainly sought access to her himself, he succeeded in interesting the American minister, with whom he was intimately acquainted, in her fate. At a late hour of the evening preceding the day on which Mrs. Mabury was to commence her novitiate, that gentleman saw Euston Hastings, and reported that though he had obtained a personal interview with her, his arguments and persuasions had been alike ineffectual in inducing her to relinquish her design.

"She is mad!" exclaimed Euston Hastings in much agitation. "She must be taken away by force."

"By whose authority?" asked the minister. "She is of age, is to all appearance sane, and has not, as far as I know, a relative in the world entitled to interfere with her disposal of herself or of her fortune."

This was all true; and stubborn as was the will of Euston Hastings, it must succumb to circumstances such as these. When he met Evelyn after this conversation, she needed not to ask the result of the efforts in which they were both so much interested—it was written in his sad eyes and on his pale and sombre brow. He had planted the seed of a poisonous tree—it had sprung up and matured and borne fruit, and he must eat of it. "So ends that act of life's drama," he had said when parting from Mrs. Mabury, before his marriage with Evelyn. He was mistaken, as we said then: to-morrow would be played out the last scene in that act.

At an early hour on that morrow, Euston Hastings presented himself at the chapel of the convent, and representing himself as a friend of the proposed novice, found no difficulty in obtaining admittance. Few persons care to see the profession of a novice, as the ceremonies are simple in comparison with those which mark the hour that puts the irrevocable seal on the destinies of the candidate. Euston Hastings, therefore, found himself nearly alone, as, standing in the shadow of a pillar, he waited the entrance of her whom he had known in such different scenes.

There was something unreal in the thought of Mrs. Mabury—the gay, the fascinating, the voluptuous, relinquishing the world which she was formed to adorn, and condemning herself to the loneliness and austerities of a conventual life. Euston Hastings almost persuaded himself that it could not be—that it was a trick adopted to play upon his feelings; but at the appointed hour, the door communicating with the convent opened; the abbot entered, and was followed by the prioress and nuns, among whom stood conspicuous the stately form of her who occupied his thoughts. A dress of white satin, and a veil of the most exquisite lace, confined to her head by a wreath of orange flowers, marked the destined bride of Heaven. She was deadly pale when first the eye of Euston Hastings rested upon her; but, immediately after entering the chapel, she looked hurriedly around, and he knew by the bright flush that rose even to her temples that she had seen him. The sight seemed only to communicate new strength to her resolves, for she walked with steadfast step to the altar. All afterwards, was as a dream to Euston Hastings. He knew not that the Mass was celebrated in his presence—he scarcely heard the music floating around him—yet he lost no movement of Mrs. Mabury. When she was leaving the chapel, he sought again to meet her eye, but in vain. She

evidently avoided looking in the direction in which he stood, whether from fear of her own weakness or of the observation of others, it was impossible even to conjecture. Again, she passed the entrance—the door closed upon her—and Euston Hastings turned away, feeling that he had indeed seen her consigned to a grave.

If Euston Hastings had seen in Evelyn the beauty of the Christian faith, Mrs. Mabury had manifested to him its necessity, as a support even to a strong mind when found in connection with lively sensibilities. Would not that wild flood of passion which had swept her reason from its throne, have found an effectual barrier in the faith which extends our hopes to another world—which makes this but the portal of our existence—which overarches the gloom of earth with the bright Heaven, and places on the Throne of the universe, the Infinitely Good, educing light from darkness, order from confusion, and from partial disturbance, everlasting peace?

The morning succeeding the event that had awakened these reflections, found him seated with Evelyn in the saloon adjoining her chamber, engaged in the examination of a catalogue of books, written to establish the truth of Christianity, when a servant entered to announce a clergyman, whose church Evelyn had attended since her restoration to health.

"Shall I excuse myself?" asked Evelyn, seeing him so much engaged.

"By no means. I shall be glad to see him—he may give me some assistance in my present design."

Mr. Calton was introduced. He was a man of middle age, whose ample brow and kindly expression of face, betokened a fine intellect and a benevolent heart.

After some desultory conversation, Euston Hastings said, "I have lately been led to look somewhat more attentively

than I have ever before done at the Christian faith. I admire its system of morals, and would gladly convince myself of its truth, but unfortunately for me, as you will probably think, my reason is little under the control of my feelings. I cannot believe except on evidence. I have, therefore, obtained a catalogue of the most celebrated books written in support of Christianity, and was about making a selection from them, when you entered. You would oblige me very much, by pointing out those among them that are most worthy of attention."

Mr. Calton took the catalogue in his hand, glanced at it a moment, and then said with a smile, "I doubt whether any or all of these books would convince you of the truth of Christianity."

"Are they not the best on the subject?" asked Euston Hastings, "or do you mean to intimate that I am beyond the reach of conviction?"

"Neither—the books are very good, and some of them you would read, I doubt not, with profit; but it is by practising, or striving to practise the Christian virtues, not by studying the Christian evidences, that we become convinced of the truth of Christianity."

"I do not understand you—will you be pleased to explain yourself?"

"Christianity, you know, professes to bring to us a revelation of the spiritual world, and to bestow on us a perfect system of morals. Now in the nature of things we can have no proof of the truth of the first, and none so conclusive of the last as its perfect adaptation to all the necessities, in all their ramified relations, of those for whom it was intended, as the light and order and peace which its practice diffuses. It is to those who do the will of His Father, that the Divine Author of our faith promises a knowledge of the truth."

"Some study is necessary to ascertain what that will is," said Euston Hastings.

"You need for this only one book—the Bible."

"Of that I have read much already with great pleasure, though some parts were quite unintelligible to me."

"It will bear to be read many times, and its most obscure passages will sometimes acquire light from a knowledge of the proper chronological arrangement of its parts, and of the state of the world at the time each was written."

"And how is this to be gained?"

"From certain books, some of which I see here, and will, with your permission, mark."

"I will thank you to do so."

Mr. Calton complied, and Euston Hastings resumed the conversation by saying, "You advised me just now to practise all the *Christian* virtues—"

"Pardon me," interposed Mr. Calton; "I said *strive* to practise them."

"Well—strive to practise—I do not perceive the difference—but in what do Christian virtues differ from others? Do you mean to designate as virtues the conventual seclusion of some sects, or the rigid outward observances of others—the fasts and self-denying ordinances of our Puritan ancestors, for instance?"

"No—I alluded by that expression to no outward observances, but to the morality of Christianity as distinguished from that of Paganism."

"In what do they differ?"

"In their whole spirit—in Paganism, self was deified. A man was brave and patriotic,—he despised pain, he achieved difficult tasks, and suppressed or annihilated giant evils, because in so doing he gained honor—he exalted HIMSELF. In Christianity, we live not unto ourselves, but unto Him who,

having attracted us by the beauty of holiness as exhibited in his life, has sealed us His by dying to save us. As we strive in vain to attain to this perfect pattern, we become humble—a virtue which Paganism never knew—then pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. Compare this sketch with our highest ideal of Pagan virtue, and see how they differ."

Euston Hastings did not answer, but a deeper gravity, almost an expression of discontent, stole over his face. Christianity was to him as a beautiful abstraction, an interesting subject of intellectual analysis; but to submit his own conduct to it as a rule of life, was quite another thing. To be a Christian meant, with him, simply to acknowledge the claims of the Christian faith to the assent of his understanding. Should he ever perceive its more spiritual meaning, it must be after repeated trials should have prostrated his self-dependence, and made him feel the need of more than mortal power to sustain mortal ill. Years of dark wandering in a land of shadows, in which his lonely soul would seek with bitter pride to conquer for itself the peace that is only God-given, still awaited him—years of that hope deferred which maketh the heart sick still remained for Evelyn as the consequence of those "*mere errors of opinion,*" of which she had thought so lightly when Everard Irving had pressed them on her notice.

For the present, the most active desire of Euston Hastings was to escape from Paris. He could not forget Mrs. Mabury so near the scene of their last meeting—the prison to which she had doomed herself for life. Her end had been attained, and she might have exulted could she have known how constantly her form was at his side, her voice in his ears. The music she had loved he could not hear without pain—the gay scenes in which she had so long been his companion, he shrank from entering. Only at Evelyn's side was he

free from her haunting presence. At her voice the dark reproachful vision fled.

These feelings were never acknowledged. His brow was as haughty, his step as firm as ever; but the eye of love cannot be deceived. Evelyn saw that he was unhappy, and she was not surprised when he proposed returning to America. The proposal was welcomed by all, except, perhaps, Mr. Manelli, who had hoped to revisit his native land in company with his most valued pupil, to whom he would have delighted to display its treasures of art. He did not, however, express the wish, or repine outwardly at its disappointment. Mary had her own reasons for being pleased at a return which she would not herself have proposed; and Mr. Beresford, though greatly improved in health, longed again for the quiet of his home, and the accustomed occupations of his library. He stipulated, however, to return by the way of London, and spend a few weeks there. As Euston Hastings readily acquiesced in this, their arrangements were made accordingly. A single week of preparation in Paris, during which Evelyn should see what still remained unseen of its objects of interest, and then they would go to London, and before the summer came they would be again in America, having passed one year—crowded with how much of life!—abroad.

Once more, ere the day of his departure came, Euston Hastings sought the residence of the American minister. It was to ask that he would see Mrs. Mabury again, and would place in her hands a letter with which he intrusted him, adding the hope that he would so far interest himself in her welfare, as to promise his aid to her if she were willing to accept it for her liberation. This pledge was readily given; and with it Euston Hastings was compelled to be satisfied. The letter he had left for Mrs. Mabury was as follows:—

"And so, Estelle, you have at last withdrawn the mask, and shown me that the gay *insouciance*, the philosophic calmness which won my admiration, were but a skilful seeming. I should perhaps thank you for thus undeceiving me, yet I can at present think only of the beautiful vision which seemed to me a reality, but which your own words have consigned to the region of unsubstantial shadows. You have often said, Estelle, that the first principle of your tactics was to carry the war into the enemy's country: you have certainly practised it most decidedly in the present instance. Were I disposed to recriminate, I might say to you that, having tendered you the highest expression of attachment which man could give,—having continued, when rejected as a lover, to bestow on you the confidence and regard of no ordinary friendship,—having still turned to you for consolation, when disappointed in other hopes, and having been deserted by you when that consolation was most needed,—I might be supposed myself to have some small reason of complaint. But I am not disposed to recriminate, Estelle. It is a style of eloquence in which your sex are always most successful: it would be unwise in me, therefore, to attempt it. Besides, I have other objects in writing you.

"Estelle, let us bury the past. Listen no longer to the dictates of that pride from which we have both already suffered so much. Banish the false idea—the offspring of a conventionalism to which I believed you superior—that there is any thing in the records of my memory that can awaken a sentiment towards you bearing the slightest affinity to scorn. Satisfied that this cannot be, Estelle, will you not revoke the decision pronounced under so false an impression?—a decision as cruel to yourself as to me. If, indeed, it is your will that we should never meet again, surely, Estelle, the world is wide enough to permit the

separation, without your burying yourself in the gloom of a cloister.

"I have, so far, preserved that calm reasoning tone which I have been accustomed to regard as most powerful over you; but if this avail not, let me pray you, by the memory of that friendship which has made so large a portion of our lives, to recall a vow made under the delusions of an excited brain. Be generous, Estelle. Be your own nobler self. You have said truly, that the life you have so rashly chosen will be to you a living death. The thought that I have been, even through the medium of your own disturbed imagination, the means of condemning you to it, will poison every joy that life may hold among its yet sealed treasures for me. For my sake, then, forbear.

"This letter will be handed to you by the American minister. Only signify to him now, before your novitiate is accomplished, your readiness to leave the convent, and he will secure your freedom. You may do so, Estelle, without danger of meeting me; for when you receive this, I shall already have left Paris—and, except by your own wish, will never again appear before you; though I shall ever remain, with the truest friendship as well as the deepest respect,

"Yours,

'E. HASTINGS."

CHAPTER XXII.

"Like a white swan down a troubled stream,
So thou, with queenly grace and gentle pride,
Along the world's dark waves in purity dost glide."

MRS. NORTON.

THE last evening which our party designed to spend in Paris had arrived. They had finished their work there. Their last visit had been paid; their last tour of observation made; even their last purchase sent home and packed; and they were experiencing that feeling of ennui which is the invariable attendant of want of occupation, when a package of letters from home was delivered to them. Never did letters arrive more opportunely. Mary retired at once to her own room, with two that were addressed to her. They were from Aspasié Manelli and Everard Irving. The last was read first; and so much of its contents as depicted his own life during her absence, we will lay before the reader.

"*New York, Jan. 12th*, 182—.

"DEAR MARY,—

"Although nothing was said of our corresponding when we parted, I flatter myself that no apology is necessary for writing to so early and true a friend. I have even persuaded myself that you will have expected to hear from me before this letter will arrive, and that I ought to inform you that only my uncertainty respecting your movements—an uncertainty which Mr. Manelli's last let-

ter to Aspasié, has relieved—has prevented my writing you before. Certainly I cannot plead the excuse for silence which was most common with us in our schooldays, that 'we had nothing to write;' for never have I lived so full and true and satisfying a life as during the last six months.

"Do you remember our last conversation on the bank of the river, at Beresford Hall? 'I rejoice,' said you, 'that you have found the true secret of happiness—work for noble ends.' It was premature rejoicing as I told you then, Mary. I was then working only that I might live, but a fuller study and longer practice of my profession have revealed to me so many abuses to be corrected, so many evils to which a thorough understanding and just appreciation of law, will bring the best remedy, that I can truly say, I now live to work. I am more and more ashamed every day of the egotism, the narrowness of mind which could see only my own low, little wants amidst such noble incentives to action; my own profits amongst results so wide-extended and so important to humanity. In America, especially, do I feel that there is no excuse for egotism or indolence. Here, ignorance to be taught, poverty to be relieved, vice to be repressed, and injustice to be rectified, lie all around us—not fenced off and dwelling apart from '*the respectable classes*,' as in other lands, but coming in actual contact with us at every turn. Europe is pouring upon our shores its ignorant and corrupt and despairing population; we must either bend all our energies to enlighten, to purify, and to elevate them, or we must relinquish our free republican government as a Utopian dream, for such men cannot govern themselves.

"I blush when I think of all this, to remember how many months—but for the sudden loss of fortune it might have been years—of life I flung away in selfish sorrow, for my own wrecked hopes. Well is it for us, that the Ruler

of our lives is not such a one as ourselves, or He would oftener punish our mad, rebellious resistance to His will, by surrendering us to our fancied joys, which would sometimes prove our sorest punishment.

"I have told you of my inner life, and of the outer, I have little to tell. I have my home still with our friend Aspasié, and my business prospers. I made my *debût* as a lawyer, in a manner which excited no little amusement among my professional brethren. An old friend of your father had, for his sake doubtless, placed in my hands a case involving considerable property. The opposing party was a man I knew, and one of the most wrong-headed, right-hearted men in the world. From the clearness of the law in the case, I was convinced that he was acting under some false impression, and that he would be compelled, if the business were carried into court, to pay large costs, in addition to other expenses, which I believed he could ill afford, and all on a question which, if settled in his favor, would benefit him little, though it would injure his antagonist much. I saw him, and after one or two stormy interviews, succeeded in making him hear me—exposed to him the utter untenableness of his case, and induced him to withdraw his suit. A peacemaker, I was told, would prove a somewhat unprofitable character for a lawyer, to which I replied, that peacemaker was but another name for Christian, and if the characters of Christian and lawyer were incompatible, I must only cease to be a lawyer. Those who made merry with my new mode of practising law, have been disappointed in one of their prognostications. I have not had less but more business in consequence of it. Both the gentlemen concerned have taken a warm and active interest in my success, and persons generally seem by no means indisposed to intrust their interests to one who has shown that he was willing to s

his clients the cost and annoyance of litigation, even at the expense of diminishing his own fees.

"I have written altogether of myself, both because I have the vanity to hope that the subject will interest you, and because my life is at present too unsocial to offer any variety of topics. I have formed an acquaintance lately with one interesting family, some of whose members I hope one day to introduce to you."

A few unimportant particulars respecting Aspasié, expressions of interest for Mr. Manelli, Mr. Beresford and his daughter, and assurances of sincere and warm regard for Mary, concluded the letter. Over this letter Mary lingered long, but at length it was laid aside and that from Aspasié was opened.

Aspasié wrote cheerfully of herself and her prospects, gave a playful description of the peculiarities of some of her present family, and then spoke of Everard Irving—of his reported powers as a speaker, of his success in business, of his improved spirits, and lastly, of that to which she attributed the improvement. On this last topic she did not write very clearly, but her hints and dark sayings conveyed to Mary the impression that there was in New York a very interesting young lady, on whose father Everard Irving had conferred important benefits, which she repaid by her love. "This," she added, "is almost the only family which Mr. Irving visits intimately"—

Mary had remembered the "interesting family" with which he had "lately formed an acquaintance," and she turned again to the passage in his letter that alluded to them. She read—"some of whose members I hope one day to introduce to you."

"*One* of whose members, he should have written," said Mary to herself, "as his wife, doubtless. Well, I hope he will be happy."

Mary sat long in deep thought, with her letters lying unheeded on her lap. When she arose, it was to seek Mr. Manelli.

"You have no bad news, I hope," he said, looking doubtfully into her grave face, as she entered.

"Oh, no! my news is all good, and Aspasié writes so cheerfully, and seems to do so well without you, that it encourages me to ask you to change your plans, and instead of accompanying the rest of the party home immediately, to go into Italy with me, and show me all the beauties of your own land. I shall never probably return to Europe, and to go home now, and leave Switzerland and Germany and Italy unvisited, would be almost inexcusable."

Mr. Manelli was delighted, and the rest of her party only wondered that Mary had not before expressed so natural a desire. The good woman who had accompanied Evelyn from Italy was quite willing to return there with Mary, and joining a party of English, with some of whom Euston Hastings was acquainted, she and Mr. Manelli turned their faces southward very soon after their friends had left Paris in the opposite direction for England.

Minutely to trace the steps of either party is not our intention. In a few weeks Beresford Hall was again tenanted. Mr. Beresford—changed only in the snowy whiteness that had displaced every trace of black from his hair—took his accustomed place in his library with a quiet satisfaction that showed itself in every word and look and movement. The very day of their arrival he requested a few minutes' private conversation with Euston Hastings. They met in the library. As Euston Hastings entered, Mr. Beresford advanced to meet him with an outstretched hand.

"Mr. Hastings," he said, "I throw myself upon your mercy—I entreat you do not take Evelyn from me. Nay,

hear me out—wherever you go there must Evelyn follow—she would be miserable separated from you; but I shall be equally miserable apart from her. All I have will one day be yours—let Beresford Hall become so from this moment, and allow me to be your guest—or, if you prefer the city—"

"No, Mr. Beresford," said Euston Hastings, touched more by Mr. Beresford's confidence than even by his liberality, "our home will be here in your own Beresford Hall. Heaven forbid that I should usurp the place of master, which you fill so nobly! I am and will be your guest, except for two or three months of the winter, when I hope you will not refuse to accompany us to the city."

When this conversation was reported to Evelyn, she felt that her happiness was perfect; but as week after week passed by, and the shadow which had darkened the brow of Euston Hastings from his meeting with Mrs. Mabury in Paris still lay there—charmed away, it is true, at times by her gentle influence, but only to return with denser gloom—a truer estimate of earthly joy arose within her, and "Shall I receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall I not receive evil?" became the language of her humbled heart. "My consoler!" was an epithet by which her husband often addressed her now, and it was that which she best loved to hear from his lips. Trembling was mixed with all her joy, for though Euston Hastings no longer mocked at the Christian's faith—though he read with apparent interest the book in which it was revealed, studied perseveringly those proofs of the authenticity of that revelation which Mr. Calton had recommended, and maintained a frequent correspondence with that gentleman, Evelyn knew that there was still no full assent of his understanding to the truth—no surrender of his heart to its influences, and she had learned that the only stable foundation for human con-

duct was to be found in love and obedience to the law of Heaven, embodied in that truth.

For six months Mary Raymond and Mr. Manelli travelled through scenes which had been to her as a lovely dream, and were to him full of pleasant memories. To him it was a season of quiet, undisturbed rest after long labor. He would willingly have extended its duration. But ere the six months were concluded, somewhat of dissatisfaction mingled with Mary's enjoyment. She was not resting after labor—she was not recruiting exhausted health and energy —she was spending the prime of life, the season of vigorous action, in self-indulgence, while at home, as Everard Irving had written, there was a mass of ignorance to be taught, of poverty to be relieved, and vice to be repressed,—which needed the zealous and untiring action of every Christian heart. As she marked the squalid misery that moved side by side with princely luxury in other lands, she said to herself, "It is from selfishness such as I am exhibiting—from forgetfulness of the poor, who were left with us by their and our Master for good to both, that inequalities so shameful to Christian lands have arisen."

From such suggestions arose Mary's plan of life for the future. She resolved that she would no longer live in any way for herself—she would return to America, and establish herself in her own early home near Baltimore, with Mrs. Maclaurin, if she could induce that lady to reside with her. There she would devote all her gifts of mind and fortune to doing good. The children of the poor in her neighborhood she would gather into a school, and give some hours of every day to their instruction; to the sick and aged she would supply the comforts they needed; and to all she would extend that support in trial and encouragement to virtue which is derived from the personal influence of one whose qualities and position inspire respect.

These designs were no sooner formed by Mary, than she took the first step towards their execution by seeking the approval and co-operation of Mrs. Maclaurin. The answer she received was all she desired—full in its approval, hearty in its expressions of sympathy and promises of aid. To her home in Baltimore Mrs. Maclaurin had no especial attachment which might have rendered her unwilling to exchange it for one at Elmwood, the beautiful country-seat of Mr. Raymond, at which Mary's earlier life had been passed.

Mr. Martin, the former guardian of Mary, had consented, when she became of age, to continue his care of her property as her agent; and to him she wrote, communicating her intention to reside there in future, and requesting that the house and grounds at Elmwood might be put into good order as soon as possible, as she hoped to find Mrs. Maclaurin established there on her arrival. All was done as she wished, and autumn flowers were still blooming in the gardens of her home when she arrived in November.

Leaving Mr. Manelli in Baltimore to superintend the landing of their baggage, Mary proceeded at once to Elmwood. She rejoiced to be thus alone; for any human eye would have been an intolerable restraint when approaching, for the first time after years of absence and trial, to the home of her happy childhood. The road by which she travelled was familiar as an oft-told tale—at every turn it aroused some new reminiscence of the loved and lost; and when at length she caught in the distance the chimney-tops and pointed roof of her home, through the old elms that gave their name to the place, her tears burst forth at the thought that they who had been wont to welcome her most fondly after the shortest absence, were no longer dwellers in its walls.

At a quarter of a mile from the house a gate gave entrance to a wide avenue bordered also by elms. Here Mary, as she had no baggage with her, dismissed the carriage in

which she had come, saying that she would proceed to the house on foot. She waited in the avenue till the coachman had driven away, on his return to the city, and then turning into a footpath, walked in the direction of a wood, whose natural growth of cedar and pine had been left undisturbed. The sunlight, so bright beyond this wood, scarce entered there; and as Mary penetrated deeper within its shadow, her heart grew chill at the silence and gloom around her. She soon reached the spot she sought, and stood beside the neat enclosure within which lay her beloved parents and the children whom they had lost in infancy. Mary saw that this spot had been carefully guarded during her absence; and bending her head for a few minutes in lowly prayer before the orphan's God, she pursued her way towards the house, endeavoring to recall more cheerful associations as she proceeded. Her approach was first perceived by some of the old domestics, and their vociferous exclamations of delight and wonder at her arrival, drew forth Mrs. Maclaurin, from whom she received a more quiet but not less joyful welcome.

In a few days, with the aid of Mrs. Maclaurin, Mary found herself engaged in the execution of her benevolent designs. Many hours of each day were passed in instructing the ignorant and consoling and aiding the miserable, who soon learned to apply to her for sympathy and relief; the remainder was given to the claims of friendship, the improvement of her own mind, and the cultivation of the art she loved. In such a life there was no place for morbid regrets. Disappointments and discouragements she had, for she was still an inhabitant of earth—shadows from the past sometimes darkened her way; but these were temporary and accidental. In general, peace was within her and light around—the peace and the light of Heaven, which the world can neither give nor take away.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Mark how there still has run, inwoven from above,
Through thy life's darkest woof the golden thread of love."
R. C. FRENCH.

How quickly passes time to those whose hearts are full of great objects which they do not merely dream over, but truly and earnestly strive to execute! Rapidly are they sweeping by the objects of time and sense—rapidly nearing the Infinite and Eternal!

Winter, spring, summer had passed over Mary as a dream, and again the glowing tints of autumn began to be visible in the heavens and the earth, in the richer crimson and purple and gold of the sunset clouds, and in the almost equally brilliant colors of the forest leaves. During this year she had continued to correspond occasionally, both with Aspasié Manelli and with Everard Irving. With Everard, her correspondence had been little satisfactory. Afraid of saying too much—watchful over every expression, lest some unguarded word or phrase should give the key to the one secret of her life, Mary's letters were constrained and cold beyond her own intentions; and Everard, with somewhat of that sensitiveness which is engendered even in the most confiding natures by change of fortune, did not make his usual efforts to dissipate this coldness.

The weather this year had been unusually fine during the whole month of October, and as Mary returned from a lonely walk one evening in the latter part of that month,

she experienced some of that buoyant elasticity which seemed the character of the air she inhaled. At the entrance to the little shrubbery through which lay her path to the house, she found a horse standing.

"Our good pastor must have ridden out from Baltimore to see Mrs. Maclaurin as he promised," she thought, and hastened in to welcome him. She entered the parlor in which she had left her friend. She was still there, and with her—could it be?—he turned his head—it was Everard Irving.

It would be difficult to say who evinced most embarrassment at this meeting—Everard who expected it, or Mary to whom it was so great a surprise. The constraint which had marked their correspondence, was visible in their conversation, which was limited to the most commonplace inquiries and answers. Half an hour passed thus, then they grew silent, and he arose.

"You will not leave us," said Mrs. Maclaurin; "surely this is near enough to Baltimore for the business which you say brought you."

"It was here that my business brought me," he replied, and though he smiled as he said it, Mrs. Maclaurin thought the smile was sad.

Mary did not speak, till turning to her, he asked, "At what hour to-morrow can you see me most conveniently on this business?"

"At any hour you please."

"I will be with you then, at ten in the morning if you permit. I would not propose so early an hour, but that I shall be able, by doing so, to proceed homewards in the afternoon."

Mrs. Maclaurin looked at Mary with surprise. She expected to hear her urge his remaining to-night, or his returning with the design of making a longer visit to-morrow,

but she did neither—she stood indeed as if bewildered, and answered only by a bow to his arrangement. The color rose to his forehead, and Mrs. Maclaurin sympathized with the wounded pride and affection which she believed that flush to betoken. He had spoken to her of his emotions in revisiting that house—he had called it *his home*—the only home he had ever known; and now, he had been received in it with far less of kindness, or even of courtesy, as Mrs. Maclaurin thought, than its mistress was accustomed to show to the merest stranger.

Nothing of all this did Mrs. Maclaurin say on this evening, but the next morning, when she was preparing to take Mary's place in her little school, she said, "I hope you will not be quite so cold to your friend, Mr. Irving, as you were yesterday evening."

"Cold!—I do not understand you," said Mary, coloring.

"Perhaps I am wrong to remark on it," Mrs. Maclaurin began; but Mary interrupted her with, "Oh no! pray tell me all you think."

"Then, I think," said Mrs. Maclaurin with a smile, "that you would scarcely have allowed a stranger who had any claim on your courtesy, to leave your house without an invitation to remain."

"You invited him to stay."

"I am not the mistress of the house."

"But Everard—surely he should wait for no invitation,—he should be nearly, if not quite as much at home here as I."

"He was so once, but things are changed with him since then, and changed in some points, too, which probably render him peculiarly sensitive to coldness."

Mrs. Maclaurin left the room as she ceased speaking, and Mary was alone with no very pleasant subject for her thoughts. She had then been unkind to Everard, while

she was only fearful of betraying how much pleasure his presence gave her. Here was but another form of that selfishness which it had been the labor of her life to subdue. She determined that no fear for herself should prevent her making the *amende.*

Mary had scarcely made this resolution, when Everard entered. His countenance was grave, and his manner at first somewhat formal, but Mary met him with an outstretched hand, and though the color rose to her cheek, and he might almost have seen her heart beat, she commanded her voice to the utterance of a frank and cordial greeting.

"Before we say a word of business, Everard, you must let me order your horse to be put up."

"It will not be necessary, Mary," he said, laying his hand upon hers, as she would have rung the bell; "I must return to Baltimore by noon."

"Surely, Everard, you may spare one day in a year to your home. You gave me pain by going away yesterday evening—you will wound me yet more deeply, if you refuse to remain with us to-day."

"Wound you, Mary! that I should be loth indeed to do —you who have been so true and generous a friend—you to whom I owe it that misfortune did not fall on me with so stunning a blow, as to crush at once hope and life from my heart."

"What do you mean, Everard?" asked Mary, falteringly.

"That I know all, Mary—the sacrifice you made for me —the greater sacrifice you would have made had Mr. Beresford permitted. The pecuniary debt thus incurred I come now to repay; but, Mary, I can never either cancel or forget your generous and delicate kindness."

"And you learned all this from Mr. Beresford?" said Mary, in a tone which showed that she felt no little dispo-

sition to reproach that gentleman for his betrayal of confidence.

"Yes," replied Everard; "but only when he could no longer honestly withhold the information from me. The one office in which those unfortunate stores of mine were insured, has resumed payment, contrary to all expectation; and I have received from it the full amount of its insurance —ten thousand dollars. In winding up this business, I required to see Banker's books. He hesitated to show them; but I insisted, and found Mr. Beresford's advances entered on them. I hastened to pay him, and learned that he was only your agent. Here, Mary, is a check for the amount, principal and interest, ———."

"Oh Everard!" exclaimed Mary, putting aside the hand which presented the check, "do not speak to me of debt and payment as if we were strangers—here, too, in our home, where all we had was shared. Everard, we were brother and sister then—let us be so now."

She looked pleadingly in his face, while tears gathered in her eyes. Everard Irving gazed on her earnestly for a moment—then averted his face with a sad expression.

Mary continued, in a voice tremulous with emotion—"I fear I have offended you. I fear I have sometimes been cold and distant to you; but only treat me as a brother now, and I will ever be a true sister to you—share with me as a brother—"

"Mary!" said Everard, in a husky and agitated voice, "it cannot be—I can never more be your brother."

"Everard! have I indeed so deeply displeased you?"

"Displeased me! What could give rise to such a fancy?"

"Did you not say you could never again be a brother to me?"

"Because I love you, Mary, as brother never loved. It would be happiness indeed to be your brother—your guide

—your protector; but I dare not trust myself. Your calm, sisterly affection would not satisfy me—my jealous, exacting attachment would disturb the serenity of your life. Even now, Mary, I have distressed you."

She had sunk into a chair, and leaning her arms upon a table near her, had covered her face with her clasped hands.

"Forgive me, Mary, a confession which has been wrung from me by the fear that you would think me cold, insensible to your kindness. No—I cannot be your brother—you see it now, Mary—I should wound you thus forever."

He was silent; but Mary neither spoke nor stirred. At length she felt that he was approaching her—that he stood beside her; yet he spoke not till many minutes, as it seemed to her, had passed away. Then in low, sad tones, he asked, "Will you not look on me, Mary, and give me your hand in token of forgiveness before I go?"

"I have nothing to forgive," almost whispered Mary.

"Then we part in peace—Heaven bless you for that!—Farewell!"

"Why must you go?"

Mary stretched out her hand as if to detain him, though still averting her face from his gaze.

"Why must I go? Have you not heard me, Mary?"

"I heard—but—if—I too—"

She could not proceed; but it was unnecessary. There is language more expressive and more convincing, as it is more spiritual than words. Perhaps Everard himself knew not how hope flashed on his mind at one moment, and became certainty the next. We only know that Mrs. Maclaurin's benevolent interest in him was gratified by finding him still there on her return, and that during the day she had the still further pleasure of learning that he had

sent to Baltimore for his baggage, and would remain at Elmwood for several days. Nor was she long left in doubt of the attraction which detained him: ere she slept that night Mary had communicated to her the result of the morning's interview, and had found, in her approbation and blessing, the only increase to her happiness which it was possible for earth to confer.

The next day Everard Irving had a conversation with Mrs. Maclaurin, some part of which may perhaps interest the reader. He had been speaking of the gradual conquest which Mary had made of his heart, and alluding, to the new and nobler character which seemed to him to have been developed in her mind, and to have impressed itself on her person and manner when he saw her in Baltimore at the time of Mr. Beresford's accident, he said, "I should have loved her then, had not my heart been preoccupied."

"You acknowledge, then, that your heart was in your first engagement," observed Mrs. Maclaurin, with a smile.

"Yes—I loved Evelyn Beresford with all the truth and ardor of an enthusiastic boy; yet long since, before I dreamed that a richer treasure was in store for me, I had learned to rejoice that this love had not been successful. Her character, I am told, has been developed into rare excellence; but this has been under trials which, with me, she could never have known: and such as she was, she would either have checked the expansion of my own nature, or she would have failed to meet its demands."

"It is well when we see that *for us* God hath done all things well."

"It is—and this I can do. Sheltered in my boyhood by the kindest and most liberal of friends, what seemed the misfortunes of my life formed the very discipline necessary to wake up my self-indulgent nature to a sense of the deep responsibilities incident to my being, and the lofty attain-

ments of which it was capable. And now what a treasure has been bestowed on me! Of other gifts I may be proud, but Mary makes me humble. What am I that this being, so peerless in loveliness and in true nobility of soul, should have been given to me?"

At the end of a week Everard Irving returned to New York, but only to make arrangements for leaving it altogether as a place of residence. A few months of diligent study enabled him to obtain admission to the courts of Maryland; and the reputation he had already gained at the bar of New York, united to the interest felt in him by Mr. Raymond's friends, won for him immediately some practice, which his talents, his industry, and his integrity could not fail rapidly to increase. He had many reasons for this change of residence, but the most influential was, that thus Mary and he might continue to have their home at Elmwood.

In that home—in the presence, not of a careless throng, but of a few deeply attached friends, among whom Mrs. Maclaurin, Mr. Manelli, and Mr. Beresford were the most honored—they plighted those vows which would unite them till death.

In a conspicuous part of one of the reception-rooms at Elmwood, hung Mr. Manelli's picture of the death of Socrates. The likeness of the pictured Alcibiades to Everard Irving, was less striking than it had been formerly. Mr. Manelli remarked this to Mary, but he added—"His face is more noble now, though it is perhaps less beautiful."

Mr. Manelli was right. The auburn hue of Everard Irving's hair had darkened into brown, and the brightness of youth, which even the sorrowful occasion could scarcely cloud in the picture, had given place to a more thoughtful and earnest expression in the living man. The trials which had awakened his powers, had impressed something of al-

most stern decision on his countenance in repose; but as Mary's eye turned to him for a moment at Mr. Manelli's observation, a smile passed over his face—"How can Mr. Manelli say that he is less beautiful!" was the thought that smile awakened.

Thus far we have traced their life's journey, and here we leave them. With right principles, true affection, and an earnest recognition of the claims of Heaven to their supreme devotion and entire submission, what can trouble their peace?

CHAPTER XXIV.

"— Keep no watch in darkness,
The angels then are near."

Many changes had the two years which had passed thus to Mary Raymond, brought to others whose names have been found upon our pages,—for everywhere "time rolls its ceaseless course," and the tide of life sweeps on, bearing to each heart its burden of sorrow, or its rich argosy of joy.

Ere the autumn closed which had brought such happiness to the mistress of Elmwood, the once brilliant Mrs. Mabury had been laid in a darker and narrower dwelling than the convent cell in which she had spent nearly three miserable years. She had sold herself to the Moloch of revenge, for the one sweet draught by which she had hoped to slake the burning thirst of pride. Well had the fiend counselled. For the lover of ease, the voluptuary whose heart was yet not all insensible, no punishment could have been devised so terrible as the haunting consciousness that within the gloomy cell of a convent, with a body worn by austerities and a spirit burning with rage, was one who could accuse him of having placed her there, and that one a being whose joyous nature had lent their chief charm to many years of his existence. Mrs. Mabury in her grave would have been forgotten—Mrs. Mabury in a convent was an ever-present thought. She stood as a threatening shadow between him and the wife he now truly loved—she drove him forth from his home to scenes of noisy merriment, and sent him back from these to his home with a sharper sting at his heart. Mrs. Mabury's revenge was complete—but

what availed it to her? She knew it not. Of the isolation of her present life she had not dreamed. And now her heart, shut out from all which had made her world, preyed on itself. The religious forms in which her life was passed were to her but forms—dead forms—a mockery of Heaven, a torture to herself. She raved in secret at the folly which, when the world was all before her, and its pleasures, save the society of Euston Hastings, at her command, had thrown all the rest away in childish petulance because this had been denied her. Gladly would she then have accepted the once-rejected interference of the American minister in her behalf—but it was too late. She had already taken the vow which separated her from the world, and could neither see him nor communicate with him without the consent of her superior. Her nature was too unyielding to be moulded into submission to the terrible circumstances with which she had environed herself. The heart which will not bend, when subjected to such circumstances, must break—and so did hers. And thus ended the pride which God condemns, and the world applauds!

Her death might have remained long unknown in America, but for the vigilant inquest into her condition maintained by some of her husband's relatives to whom, by his will, his property would revert after her decease. To Euston Hastings, the intelligence of it brought one quick, keen pang, but that passed away, and with it the oppressive sadness that had hung like a dark, heavy pall over his mind and heart. He felt like one awakened from a nightmare.

While he had been brooding in remorseful gloom over the past, or endeavoring to escape in feverish excitement from its haunting memories, angel faces had appeared within his home, and glad voices had broken its stillness. Within a year after their departure from Paris, Evelyn had given birth to a daughter, and about two years later to a son.

The little Eva, for so Euston Hastings called his first-born, was a fair child, with the soft eyes and dimpled cheeks of her mother, and with all her mother's loving heart. The affection of this child for her grave, quiet father, had been the subject of wondering observation to nurses and nursery-maids, and of silent delight to Evelyn, almost from her birth. She was a gentle child, and few things moved her to any vivacious demonstration of feeling, but *his* entrance was early welcomed by a soft, dove-like note, and an eager, dancing movement of her hands and feet. She would lie quietly for hours with her head pillowed on his bosom, and when he was compelled to resign her, though she seldom cried aloud, the quivering of the little lip, and the tenacious grasp of the baby-hand, made a more touching appeal to his feelings. That clinging baby-touch, that soft baby-voice, had exercised a magic power over the heart of Euston Hastings, awakening the first pure, unselfish love he had ever known. To this love, and to the home it brightened, he turned with new power of enjoyment, after the knowledge of Mrs. Mabury's death had set him free from the torture caused by the thought of her living agonies. It was but a few short weeks after this, that he sat reading one day in the room which Mary had formerly occupied at Beresford Hall, but which had long been designated in the family, as Mr. Hastings' study, from the fact of his having removed his books and papers there, and spending many of his hours there. He had not read long ere he heard those little feet "whose very step had music in't" for his ear, come pattering along the floor of the wide hall, and then, as they paused, a little hand tapped at the door, and a soft voice cried, "'Tis Eve, papa."

He delayed for a while to open the door, that he might hear the sweet summons again. When admitted, the

child amused herself for some time with a book of colored engravings, but at length climbed upon the sofa on which he sat, and saying in a languid voice, "Eve, tired, papa"—stretched herself out with her head on his knee, and soon fell asleep with his hand stroking her ringlets. She had looked a little pale in the morning, but as she slept, her color deepened till her cheeks and lips were of a carnation tint. Her breath came quick; and while he was admiring her beauty, and rejoicing in what he thought the glow of health, fever was rioting in her veins—the canker-worm was eating into the heart of his flower. We pass over the thrill of agony when first he discovered the truth—the days and nights of fearful watching beside the couch of that beloved sufferer, during which Evelyn—the fond Evelyn to whom her children were as the dearer parts of her own being—had to become his comforter, and come at once to those last hours, every moment of which impressed itself indelibly on his being.

The child's disease was scarlet fever; and as it was before the German Hippocrates had revealed to the world the great antidote against that poison with which God has furnished it, or at least, before that revelation had been widely received in America, her case admitted little hope from the first. Ten days and nights of ever-deepening gloom had passed, and in the silent night, having insisted that Evelyn, who had herself shown symptoms of illness through the day, should retire to bed, Euston Hastings sat alone watching with a tightening heart the disturbed sleep of the little Eva. It was near midnight when that troubled sleep was broken. The child turned from side to side uneasily, and looked somewhat wildly around her.

"What is the matter with my darling?" asked Euston Hastings in tones of melting tenderness.

"Where's mamma?—Eve want mamma to say, 'Our Father!'"

Euston Hastings had often contemplated the beautiful picture of his child kneeling with clasped hands beside her mother, to lisp her evening prayer, or since her illness forbade her rising from her bed, of Evelyn kneeling beside it, taking those clasped hands in hers, and listening to Eve's softly-murmured words. Well he knew, therefore, what was meant by Eve's simple phrase, "To say Our Father."

"Mamma is asleep," he said; "when she awakes I will call her."

"No—no—papa; Eve asleep then."

"I will call her at once, then, darling," and he would have moved, but the little hand was laid on his to arrest him.

"No—don't wake poor mamma; papa, say Our Father! for Eve."

"Will Eve say it to papa! Speak then, my darling," he added, finding that though the hands were clasped and the sweet eyes devoutly closed, Eve remained silent.

"No—Eve too sick, papa—Eve can't talk so much—papa kneel down and say, Our Father, like mamma did last night—won't you, papa?"

Euston Hastings could not resist that pleading voice; and kneeling, he laid his hand over the clasped ones of his child, and for the first time since he had murmured it with childish earnestness in his mother's ear, his lips gave utterance to that hallowed form of prayer which was given to man by a Divine Teacher. At such an hour, under such circumstances, it could not be uttered carelessly; and Euston Hastings understood its solemn import—its recognition of God's sovereignty—its surrender of all things to Him. He *understood* it we say—but he trembled at it. His infidelity was annihilated; but he believed as the unreconciled believe,

and his heart almost stood still with fear while "Thy will be done on earth even as it is in heaven," fell slowly from his lips.

Soothed by his compliance, Eve became still, and seemed to sleep, but only for a few minutes. Suddenly, in a louder voice than had been heard within that room for days, she exclaimed, "Papa—papa—see there—up there, papa!"

Her own eyes were fixed upward, on the ceiling, as it seemed to Euston Hastings, for to him nothing else was visible, while a smile of joy played on her lips, and her arms were stretched upward as to some celestial visitant.

"Eve coming!" she cried again. "Take Eve!"

"Will Eve leave papa?" cried Euston Hastings, while unconsciously he passed his arm over her, as if dreading that she would really be borne from him.

With eyes still fixed upward, and expending her last strength in an effort to rise from the bed, Eve murmured in broken tones, "Papa come too—mamma—grandpa—little brother—dear papa—"

The last word could have been distinguished only by the intensely-listening ear of love. It ended in a sigh; and Euston Hastings felt, even while he still clasped her cherub form, and gazed upon her sweetly-smiling face, that his Eve had indeed left him forever. That she had ceased to exist, with the remembrance of that last scene full in his mind, he could not believe. Henceforth Heaven with its angels, the ministering spirits of the Most High, was a reality—it was the habitation of his Eve, and his own heart went longingly forth to it. His proud, stern, unbending nature had been taught to tremble at the decree of "Him who ruleth over the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." The Being and Nature upon which he had hitherto speculated as grand abstractions, became at once unspeakably-interesting facts. Would He contend with him in

wrath? Would He snatch from him one by one the blessings of his life, crushing the impious heart which had reviled His attributes and denied His existence? or was He indeed "so long-suffering," so "plenteous in mercy," that He would prove even to him that His might was the might of a Saviour?

Such were his thoughts as with still, concentrated agony he turned from the grave of his cherished child to watch beside the suffering Evelyn. She had taken the terrible disease from her little Eve, and lay for many days insensible to her own danger or her husband's agony. But God was merciful, and her husband and father received her back as from the grave. The heart which judgment had aroused, mercy melted. A consciousness of his own unworthiness of God's mercy—a fear that *he could* not be heard—checked the cry which anguish would have extorted from Euston Hastings; and the first real utterance from his heart to Heaven was in the language of thanksgiving.

We cannot pause to trace all the movements of that subtle mind, and that world-incrusted heart, in its progress back to the peace and hope from which it had so long wandered. Think not that the evils of the past were at once overleaped and forgotten: no miraculous tree sweetened at once the waters of the fountain from which his life's stream proceeded. The pride he had so long nourished, and which had stamped its seal indelibly upon his external air, often stood between him and that Divine Spirit who "dwelleth with the humble and contrite heart." Often did it wring his heart with vain regret for actions which its long uncontrolled impulses had prompted. The selfishness, the love of ease which had attained such giant strength, were not at once and forever to be crushed. Again and again would they rear their heads from the dust, and disturb the repose of his life. Even his infidelity was not to be wholly powerless over his future

life—the perversions to which he had submitted his reason would often rise like a mist to obscure the faith by which he would thenceforward have directed his life.

For Evelyn, the now fondly-loved wife—the cherished child—the happy mother—life was henceforth full of blessing. If she had lost some of the joyousness which marked her early days, it was replaced by a serenity more stable, and therefore more to be desired. The remembrance of the past kept her humble and prayerful in the midst of prosperity. Though her evil had been overruled for good, she could not forget the rash, headstrong passion with which, closing her ears against counsel and her eyes against danger, she had walked forward on her chosen path. She now felt that the "mere errors of opinion," which she had named so lightly, had been as a poisoned fountain which, had not Heaven in its mercy purified it, would have mingled its tainted stream with the whole current of her life.

THE END.

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